

Hillandale News



No. 232, Winter 2000/2001

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

This calendar covers CLPGS events and those organised by third parties likely to be of interest to members. Information is supplied here in good faith, but the Society and its agents take no responsibility for errors, omissions, or changes to programmes beyond its control.

JANUARY 2001	Tuesday, 16 th evening	CLPGS London	Bernard Smith (<i>Member of the Lewisham Recorded Music Society</i>) presents 'SINGERS OF THE CENTURY' – perhaps not the best, but certainly unique.
	Saturday, 20 th evening	CLPGS Midlands	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING; followed by BYFR (BRING YOUR FAVOURITE RECORD) – Members present their own choice of records.
FEBRUARY 2001	Sunday, 11 th		Wimbledon Record Fair
	Tuesday, 20 th evening	CLPGS London	Alan Palmer presents 'BRITISH CONTRALTOS'
MARCH 2001	Sunday, 11 th		Record Fair; Motorcycle Museum, Meriden, West Midlands
	Sunday, 18 th afternoon	CLPGS Northern	Members' Records on 'THE GEORGES FORMBY'
	Tuesday, 20 th evening	CLPGS London	Colin Armfield presents 'ROUND THE HORN'
	Thursday, 12 th	Christie's (London)	Mechanical Music Sale; 85 Old Brompton Road, London, SW7
APRIL 2001	Tuesday, 17 th evening	CLPGS London	Barry Raynaud presents 'PRIZE FIGHTERS' – the second Members' Quiz Night
	Sunday, 22 nd		Croydon Record Fair
	Sunday, 29 th		National Vintage Communications Fair; National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham
	Tuesday, 15 th evening	CLPGS London	John Passmore presents 'MUSIC FOR THE KEYBOARD'
MAY 2001	Sunday, 20 th		Vintage Technology Fair, De Vere Hotel, Blackpool
	Sunday, 20 th	CLPGS Northern	Meeting at the Vintage Technology Fair, Blackpool. Members to demonstrate equipment to the public.

VENUES and TIMES.

Unless stated otherwise, CLPGS Meetings take place at the following standard times and places –

- ◇ LONDON – Swedenborg Hall, Bloomsbury Way, London, WC, starting at 7.00 p.m.
- ◇ MIDLANDS – The Salvation Army Citadel, Little Shadwell Street, Birmingham. Starting times are 7.00 p.m. for 7.30 p.m.
- ◇ NORTHERN – Alston Hall, Alston Lane, Longridge, Preston, starting at 1.30 p.m.
- ◇ WEST OF ENGLAND – Venues alter (contact Paul Morris on [REDACTED]).

Cover picture – © Reed Business Information. From the cover of the Compact Disc, 'Pandora's Drums', published by ELECTRONICS WORLD, containing digital transfers of cylinder recordings, reproduced by Joe Pengelly. The permission of Joe Pengelly and the proprietors of ELECTRONICS WORLD to reproduce this artwork is hereby gratefully acknowledged. See Review on page 220, by John S. Dales.

Hillandale News

The Official Journal of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society Limited
Company Reg. No. 3124250; Registered Charity No. 1057538
The Society was founded in 1919

**Issue No. 232 – Winter
2000/2001**

CONTENTS

- 183 **Chairman's Chat**
183 **Regional Group Secretaries**
184 **Machine Collecting, no. 4; by**
Richard Taylor
186 **Edison's Sublime Gift to**
Mankind; by Colin Armfield
189 **The Balmain Gramophone,**
part 2; by Peter Heath
198 **'Cannibalism is Alive and**
Well in Greater Manchester!';
by Paul Royal
200 **Choosing a Gramophone; by**
Ivor Abelson
209 **Thoughts on Vinyl Record**
Care; by Reg Williamson
213 **The Odyssey of Caroline**
Hatchard, part 1; by Charles
A. Hooey
218 **Reviews**
221 **Reports**
228 **2001 Programmes**
229 **Letters**
237 **Small Advertisements**
Inside
Rear **News from the CLPGS**
Cover **Bookshop**

CLPGS Ltd.

Patrons:
Oliver Berliner
George Frow
Frank Andrews

President:
Mike Field

Directors:
Howard Hope (Chairman)
Christopher Proudfoot (Vice-President)
Tom Little (Minutes Secretary)
Richard Taylor (Editorial Group member)
Howard Martin (Chairman, London Meetings)
Philip Bennett (Secretary, Midlands Group)
Miles Mallinson (ex-Chairman, Northern Group)
Gavin Mist (Chairman, Northern Group)

Chairman: Howard Hope, [REDACTED], EAST
MOLESEY, Surrey; KT8 9EU.

Company Secretary: Mervyn Srodziwsky;
[REDACTED]
WOLVERHAMPTON; WV4 5TX.

Treasurer: Michael Smith; [REDACTED]
Rainham, GILLINGHAM, Kent; ME8 0HG.

Minutes Secretary: Tom Little; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CHEDDAR, Somerset; BS27 3AG.

Membership Secretary: Colin Loffler; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], NEWPORT PAGNELL;
MK16 8PH.

CLPGS Bookshop: George Woolford;
[REDACTED] WELLS-
NEXT-THE-SEA, Norfolk; NR23 1RD.
Tel./Fax.: [REDACTED].

Editorial Group: Mike Field (President); Richard
Taylor (Director); Edward Parker

Editorial correspondence to Edward Parker,
[REDACTED], Finchfield,
WOLVERHAMPTON, West Midlands;
WV3 9BU.

Tel.: [REDACTED]

Editorial e-mail: [REDACTED]

EDITORS' DESK

The first item of news to mention is that we now appear to have a new Membership Secretary, name of Colin Loffler, whose address is to be found on the previous page. Welcome aboard, Colin!

Grateful thanks are also due to Suzanne Coleman for shouldering the burden of this sometimes thankless task over the past two years, in addition to her very full home life.

Other personnel changes are noted in the Minutes of the AGM, circulated herewith.

This issue contains John Dales' review of the ELECTRONICS WORLD CD of Joe Pengelly's digital transfers of cylinder recordings. Joe has also advised us that the November 2000 issue of ELECTRONICS WORLD contained a free CD containing two audio tracks from Joe's CD – the Peter Dawson excerpt and the full run of the Kinetophone transcription – which run for about 6½ minutes.

Joe Pengelly has also supplied your editors with a copy of the American journal, THE ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY, volume 5, no. 4, published in 1977, which contains an authoritative account by Martin L. Sokol of 'The "Pre-Victor" Recordings of Enrico Caruso'. Mr. Sokol claims that the correct sequence should be regarded as –

1. First ten G & Ts, April 11, 1902
2. Next ten G & Ts, December 1, 1902
3. Seven International Zonophones, April 19, 1903
4. Three A.I.C.C. Cylinders. late October 1903

5. G & T *Mattinata* and *Pearl Fishers*, same recording session during the first 9 days of April 1904.

Martin Sokol's datings – Joe writes – have been accepted by discographers worldwide. He also points out that the Freestone and Drummond book on *Enrico Caruso, His Recorded Legacy*, published in 1960 – although a milestone at its time – has been overtaken by subsequent research, and now requires revision.

Comments have been made by one or two members that the Society's stands at fairs such as the NEC and Blackpool have been bare and/or devoid of publications for sale. We think it is worth pointing out that the stands are manned on an entirely voluntary basis, and the supply of Society publications available depends on the willingness and ability of members to bring them to the fairs concerned. On occasions, as recently, 'the usual suspects' can't be there, for whatever personal reasons, and then, the Society's stand suffers from lack of support.

The Society stands are there to publicise the Society, explain its aims, and encourage members of the public to join us. It is worth saying that they are not specifically intended to be substitute sources of publications otherwise only available from the Bookshop by mail order, which is why in some cases, display copies are available at the Society stand for inspection only. It is of course, always open to those who complain to offer to lend a hand,

Apologies to followers of Frank Andrews' series – it will resume in the next issue.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in HILLDALE NEWS must reach the Editorial Group not less than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue**. Hence, the deadline for the Spring 2001 issue will be the 17th February 2001. Copyright on all articles in HILLDALE NEWS remains the property of the authors. Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Group.

Chairman's Chat

Thanks to all Ed's efforts, the Membership List is out, and already I have had one or two customers at the shop telling me how amused they were to find other members living very close to them unbeknown. I do hope that many of you find the list a help.

Now – here is something for you to consider. The magazine which you are holding is called the HILLANDALE NEWS. (Before Christopher Proudfoot was Editor the title had the definite article, which he boldly dropped to bring you HILLANDALE NEWS.) But what about this title? 'NEWS' it ain't, and 'HILLANDALE'? Even for the *cognoscenti* who know what this refers to, the word is something of a misnomer when applied to the magazine, as only part of the content is devoted to vertical-cut recording. Had this title been an ancient one, I would have treated it with respect, but as far as anyone can remember it was dreamed up by an Editor in the 1960s.

Looked at from the point of view of someone who comes to it afresh – doesn't it look decidedly dated, not to say a little twee? I feel that as 2001 approaches, a new title would be a good idea. As we are supposedly interested in all forms of historic recording, a simple name such as THE GROOVE could serve, for instance. Sadly, the NSA took the best name – PLAYBACK – some time ago. I believe that SOUNDWAVE is also spoken for (or is that just the Bose adverts?). Do you have a view on this – or can you propose a title for future editions?

Similarly, arguments have gone back and forth for many years over the Society's

name. The full title of the CLPGS is an historic one, and for that reason I firmly believe that it must be retained for formal purposes, but to would-be members we look like a near-Masonic group of central Londoners. In fact, I don't believe we have a single member living in the Square Mile (must check in the Members' Listing!) My next proposition therefore, is that for everyday purposes we simply call ourselves '**The Phonograph and Gramophone Society**'.

Ed. has done a great job on modernising the appearance of the magazine inside and out. It now has an up to date 'feel'. A new 'masthead', as they say in Fleet Street, would complete the transformation, I believe. ■

Howard Hope

REGIONAL GROUP SECRETARIES

Midlands Group

Phil Bennett; [REDACTED]
Whitmore Reans,
WOLVERHAMPTON; WV6 0JW.
Tel: [REDACTED]

Northern Group

John Astin; [REDACTED]
HARROGATE; HG1 3LL.
Tel: [REDACTED]
Or contact [REDACTED]
PRESTON; PR3 3BP.
Tel: [REDACTED].

West of England Group

Paul Morris; [REDACTED]
EXETER; EX4 4HE.
Tel: [REDACTED]

Machine Collecting, no. 4 (or, *The Ones That Got Away!*)

by Richard Taylor

I have been a machine collector for nearly thirty years, now. The nice thing about collecting is showing off the collection, and the latest find, to friends, fellow members and acquaintances. Many of you will have seen some, or all, of my accumulation. I have had great joy in showing you – it gives me a buzz.

On Thursday, 5th October, I went to visit a very good friend – a collector – to see his latest find. We had a good day, did some exchanges, enjoyed the crack. On arriving home, I went to my garage where I store my general items and those awaiting repair, and found that they had escaped! They had made a hole in the rear side of the building, discarding horns, cylinders and other encumbrances on the way, over the lawn and fence to the next door allotment, into a wheelbarrow, along the gardens, over the hedge, and into the getaway vehicle. A well-planned operation, with outside help!

My health has not been at its best this year, but I have begun to overcome my problem. On that Thursday afternoon, when I realised what had happened, I was flattened. I felt sick, wanted to run away, hide. *I felt guilty!* I had to force myself back to realism, phone the police, my wife, who was at work, call on the next door neighbours to ask if they had seen anything. I could not bring myself to enter the garage until the police arrived. They were sympathetic, but only

interested in the value of what was missing. What *was* missing? My store is somewhat full and untidy at the best of times – now, everything had been looked through and moved. It took me that evening and most of the next day to list what was missing. Twenty-five machines had escaped, and when I worked out the cost of replacement, I was shocked at the amount.

What to do next? Give up the hobby? Cut my losses and run? Catch the deserters and accomplices: do not let them win! Alert my friends and contacts, with descriptions and photographs: do not let the trail get cold. Now I felt better – what good friends I have – the word flew around, from Scotland to Cornwall, France and Germany. I covered the large antique fairs, but as yet to no avail. But they are out there somewhere: I know them down to every screw and scratch. When they come out of hiding I will know. It was someone who had been here, knew me and where things were. It was not a chance entry – only gramophones and phonographs were taken. (A full list at the end).

Some are blaming the new membership list. No way – it was not distributed until after the event. With your help we can stop these break-outs. If we know where items are, we can help each other. Keep machine numbers, take photographs. Stand together and there will be no hiding place. Secrets will only generate

more secrecy. Let us be open; talk to each other; enjoy your collections and showing them off. If you are concerned about the financial value you have, take out itemised insurance. This is very expensive. Perhaps as a society, we could talk to insurers about some sort of group scheme? Together, we can overcome. ■

LIST OF PROPERTY TAKEN ON 5TH OCTOBER 2000.

1. The National horn gramophone – brass horn, light oak box, blue transfer;
2. Horn gramophone – no name, red and black-painted horn, dark box;
3. Edison GEM phonograph – mid-oak box, gold Edison transfer;
4. Edison GEM phonograph – green oak box, banner transfer – ‘Edison GEM Phonograph’;
5. Edison STANDARD phonograph – mid-oak box, Edison transfer, 2- & 4-minute adaptation;
6. Edison STANDARD phonograph – mid-oak box, Edison transfer, 2- & 4-minute;
7. Edison HOME phonograph – mid-oak box, banner transfer, 2- & 4-minute adaptation;
8. Edison HOME phonograph – mid-oak box, Edison transfer, 2- & 4-minute;
9. Pathé COQ phonograph – orange mahogany box, red transfer, fixed brass carry handle;
10. Pathé COQ phonograph – requiring repair;
11. Pathé COQUET phonograph, - mahogany stained box, red transfers (lid & box), green horn;
12. Pathé COQUET phonograph – requires repair;
13. Pathé COQUET phonograph – requires repair;
14. Pathé phonograph – small, gold transfer, small trumpet horn;
15. GRAPHOPHONE K phonograph – reversible lid, requires repair;
16. Britannia phonograph – Swiss, reversible box;
17. French phonograph – COQ type, reversible lid;
18. Pathé DEMOCRATIC phonograph – large cylinder, black horn, with 7 large cylinders;
19. Excelda cameraphone – black;
20. Bing tin toy gramophone – square tin box, yellow plain pattern, with 3 small records;
21. Home-made phonograph – needs repair, rough box;
22. Three small red portable gramophones, all requiring repair.

EDITORS' NOTE.

We have also been advised of a theft, on 4th October 2000, of the collection from the home of former member Don Moore, resident near Caistor, Lincolnshire. The items stolen from Don are –

1. Gillett Tinfoil replica, Serial no. 15;
2. Columbia Type Q, Serial no. 618375;
3. HMV 99 (black);
4. Alba portable (wood case) – no transfer;
5. Edison GEM B, Serial no. 283295 – no horn;
6. Columbia GRAFONOLA 202;
7. Columbia GRAPHOPHONE – silver base, 6" mandrel;
8. Edison STANDARD B – Tallcase; Serial no. 393019, no horn;
9. Edison STANDARD 4-minute – Diamond B;
10. Zonophone CHAMPION – red reproduction horn, early Exhibition needle bar, one spring broken;
11. HMV Table Grand – Oak No. 6, Serial no. 1717;
12. The Grippa – no head, restored – repolished/painted;
13. Pixie Grippa – restored – repolished/painted;
14. 2 no. x Berliner records, plus some other small records in reproduction G & T box in light oak;
15. 60-100 assorted cylinders.

ADVERTISEMENT

Phonograph Society of South Australia

An organisation of enthusiasts interested in the collection and preservation of the artifacts of sound recording and reproduction, and research into their evolution. The PSSA NEWSLETTER, containing interesting articles and news, appears eleven times a year. Relevant books and reprints are also sold. Annual dues (Australian currency): New Zealand, Asia & South Pacific, \$28; Rest of the World, \$32. We take VISA and MASTERCARD. Write to:

The Secretary, [REDACTED] Kent Town,
S.A. 5071, Australia.

Phone & Fax: [REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Edison's Sublime Gift to Mankind

(or, The Story of a Well-Travelled Disc Phonograph)

by Colin Armfield

Rather more years ago than I would like to admit to, a friend of my wife rang to ask if we wanted to buy a table, the property of her late mother-in-law. As it happened, we didn't, but my enquiry about 78s was overheard. 'Yes, there are some and we're keeping them! But there's an old gramophone we don't want.'

'What make?'

'Oh, Edison.' I gulped and asked if I could see it. Hasty checking in my then few catalogues and books suggested that the machine could only be a disc phonograph; but if so, how could it have played ordinary 78s?

Directions took me to a modest house which stood almost directly under one of the massive chimneys of Kingston Power Station. Inside, I was shown a large floor-standing machine and opened the lid. Inside, sure enough, was – a gramophone! However, on the rear inside of the lid, was the Edison signature (see Figure 1).

The front grill was removed to reveal a store for spare light bulbs and other useful paraphernalia and a tiny newspaper cutting which showed that this noble machine had undergone a 'sex-change' operation in New Zealand, then, shorn of its vital parts, was offered for sale as a gramophone by John Courts Department Store (now Whitcoulls), of Queen Street, Auckland, for 26 guineas,

or 24 difficult monthly payments of 25/3d.



Figure 1. The Edison L19, Louis XIV Disc Phonograph, before restoration.

Quite how it got from Auckland to Kingston-on-Thames is still a complete mystery, and information on this point will be gratefully received by the author!

Friendly negotiation led to a sale and the machine being squeezed into the back of our car. The short journey to our house and my workshop was followed by a long journey to restore it to its original state, this being that of an L19, Louis XIV Disc Phonograph, as illustrated on page 153 of George Frow's book, *The Edison Disc Phonographs and the Diamond Discs*.

The worm and rack of the traversing mechanism was still in place. The horn had been screwed to the bottom of the motor compartment, the brass bend had been sawn off just above the horn proper and a tone arm and sound box forced on. Of course, the original reproducer was missing. What I had imagined would be the most difficult obstacle – that of obtaining a replacement – was quite easily overcome when a dealer provided one in its original box (in the correct gold finish). I was able to get the machine working quite soon, with a temporary horn connector made of plaster of Paris. Obtaining genuine replacement parts for the horn connector, reproducer socket, horn lift handle and bottom pivot assembly took several years. Replacements came from the USA and locally.

Full restoration of the cabinet and mechanism waited until only recently when I had more time. The mechanism was dealt with first. The holes in the horn were easily closed by hammering and soft soldering. Covering the scratches and dents in the horn was done with a matt black lacquer obtained by

dissolving a couple of 78s in methylated spirit. It seemed an appropriate, if inadequate, penance for the original outrage. The horn bend and reproducer connector had to be shortened slightly so that, in use, the stylus kept pace with the reproducer. The turntable felt was badly marked with oil and dirt, but cleaned up almost miraculously with careful use of lighter fluid on a soft cloth.

Restoring the cabinet presented an altogether greater challenge. The top was badly marked (as so often) by wet rings from indoor plants that had been over-watered. The sides and rear of the cabinet had three-quarters of the varnish missing, while the door had at some stage been the subject of an incomplete stripping. It seemed the only practical course was to remove the existing finish completely and start again. Once the cabinet had been washed down with methylated spirit and sealed with a coat of button polish, an attractive mahogany was revealed. This was followed by french polishing with a coloured polish which has left the machine dark while allowing the grain and figuring to show through. The final silk finish (from 0000 grade steel wool) seems more appropriate to the age of the machine than the normal high gloss of french polish. So the machine is now restored although not to its original dark brown colour.

The end of the long journey has nearly been reached and the effect can be seen in Figure 2. I am still mystified by the four holes and two parallel bars in the bottom cupboard. If any member can tell me what is missing I shall be grateful. In the meantime, visitors to my Den listen to *Rosy Cheeks* from the *Club du Ving*t

and my lavish praise of Edison's sublime gift to mankind. ■



Figure 2. The Edison L19, Louis XIV Disc Phonograph, after restoration.



Figure 3. Whitcoulls' (formerly John Court's) Department Store, in Queen Street, Auckland, New Zealand, where the machine was originally purchased.

Acknowledgements.

1. The replacement reproducer was supplied by Fagan's Phonograph Emporium, Hornsey Rise, London, N.19.
2. Mike Hawthorn, of Roseville, California, supplied the horn connector and reproducer socket.
3. I am very grateful to Howard Hope of Hampton Court for his patience in giving much valuable advice and supplying replacements for several missing parts.
4. I have to thank Mark Hicks for advice and encouragement in restoring the cabinet.
5. The replacement Edison logo came from Edison Once Again, of California.
6. Finally, many thanks to Eric Breton, of Auckland, N.Z., who did much research, managed to track down the original retailer and provided the photo of Whitcoulls.

ADVERTISEMENT

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain

Are you interested in mechanical music?

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain caters for those interested in everything from the smallest cylinder box to orchestrions and pipe organs, including street organs, barrel pianos, automata, and singing birds along the way.

Our quarterly A4 format magazine covers all aspects of collecting and restoring these instruments, and three or more meetings a year around the country give enthusiasts an opportunity to meet and discuss their interests. For more information, write to:-

MGSGB, PO Box 299, Waterbeach, CAMBRIDGE; CB4 8DT; U.K.
or visit our website – <www.mbsgb.org.uk>

The Balmain Gramophone, part 2

by Peter Heath

In the Beginning

As is often the case with technical projects, the problems which are envisaged during the early stages are not the ones which arise in the course of the works. For example, it was thought that whatever method was adopted to provide horn motion would include a degree of 'sticktion' – that property which requires an excess of force to move an object from its 'at rest' position. In the event, this was not a problem – the system of rolling supports used for the horn and carriage allowed the whole mass to move away from rest down an incline of about one in five hundred.

Similarly, the ideas for making a horn mould were arrived at after much discussion and the result was entirely satisfactory. It was then considered that the making of the horn itself would be a simple matter – but it wasn't. This subject will be described later.

It was easy to imagine that a Balmain gramophone would work well with a record which was flat and ran concentrically, but very few are that perfect. Few 78s are unbent and they nearly all have a centre hole which is a loose fit on the spindle. Forces due to bent and eccentric records act at right angles to one another and a third force is present due to needle tip friction – this also acts at right angles to the other two. So, continually varying forces act in all three planes and they are all concentrated at the needle tip – a point load on a radius of about two thousandths of an

inch resting in a groove about one and a half thousandths of an inch deep. When these forces peak together, as they will from time to time, the needle must remain in the groove and continue to perform its main function, the transmission of vibrations to the diaphragm.

Before any practical work was undertaken, these forces were looked at in more detail.

Needle Drag

This results from needle tip friction with the record groove and no value was known for it. It was measured by playing records on an HMV 163 to the point where the governor friction pad just lifted clear of the plate and produced the familiar reduction in pitch which normally signals the need to rewind the spring.

At this point, the torque from the main spring is just sufficient to overcome drag so that by stopping the turntable and lifting the soundbox clear it is possible to measure force at the point where the needle had rested. This was accomplished by running a piece of cotton over a pulley and down to a weight resting on an electronic kitchen scale with a resolution of one gram. The other end of the cotton was attached to the record face by 'Blutack' and the amount by which the scale reading fell was noted.

The test was repeated about a dozen times on different records and during

loud and soft passages of sound level. The results produced answers in all of the tests which were consistent with one another – 30gm for quiet passages, peaking at 35gm for high sound levels.

The 163 gramophone has a needle tip weight of about 200gm, so one might expect lower drag values for most other gramophones.

Eccentric records

Under ideal conditions, the soundbox, horn and carriage would all move together in a straight line towards the record centre at a constant speed of about 20mm per minute. Eccentricity modifies this motion so that it consists of a series of backwards and forwards movements across the record face. Since the total weight of horn, carriage and soundbox is about 4000gm, very little eccentricity would be permissible if the needle tip is to remain in the groove.

It was decided to set a limit of one millimetre of eccentricity at a radius of 100mm at a speed of 78rpm acting on a mass of 4000gm, to see what the effect would be at the needle tip.

Force is the product of mass and acceleration, so that by finding the point of maximum acceleration the maximum force trying to dislodge the needle tip from the groove could be predicted.

Although beyond the scope of this article, it is fairly easy to produce an equation describing the relationship between time and distance for the prescribed limits, but converting this to maximum acceleration produced unexpected difficulties.

The problem was solved by using a scientific calculator programmed to indicate the time taken between

consecutive needle movements due to eccentricity of one thousandth of a millimetre. Time intervals of equal value meant that needle velocity was constant and therefore there was no acceleration or deceleration taking place. The largest differences took place at either side of the record where maximum eccentricity occurred and a time of 5.5 milliseconds was displayed.

Translated into needle tip force this corresponds to 27gm, which is not an insignificant amount. Change of radius makes no practical difference, for example, with the needle 40mm from the record centre, the tip force is less than 28gm.

Record eccentricity is critical and should be avoided, so far as is possible.

Bent records

The horn is supported and pivoted at two diametrically opposite points across, and very close to, its centre of gravity. The weight of the soundbox is then added to the inlet end in order to produce a needle tip static load of about 150gm.

As a bent record is played, the needle tip follows the contours, but whereas it is driven upwards, there is only the force of gravity to bring it back down. This means that a weight of 150gm has to be able to rotate a mass of about 3000gm at a sufficient speed to enable the needle tip to stay in the groove.

A bent record limit of 3mm, centre to edge, was set for design purposes.

As the horn is a pure mathematical shape, it was possible to use standard procedures to calculate surface area, volume, centre of gravity and the moment of inertia. A small amount of *papier mâché* was also made up and

allowed to dry before being measured for density. The value obtained was very close to unity, the same as water, so horn volume in cubic centimetres was also the predicted weight in grams.

This value was used to predict the moment of inertia about the transverse axis of the horn, which is the rotational equivalent of ordinary weight. It is denoted by I , and for an exponential horn has a numerical value of about 10% of the true weight in units of metres and kilograms. Once the I value is known, the needle tip maximum vertical force is easily calculated from record speed and degree of bending, and was shown to be hardly greater than about 3gm.

So, bent records, within sensible limits, do not present any kind of problem. Another case where a factor seen as a possible major problem turned out to be no problem at all!

Setting the main dimensions

Researches by fellow member Frank James had unearthed a wealth of material from the Patent Office and extracts from GRAMOPHONE magazine, but only one actual photograph was available. This appears in the 1930s Cassell book entitled *Modern Gramophones and Electrical Reproducers* and was reprinted in Part 1 of this article, HILLANDALE NEWS, no. 231, page 132. No dimensions were available and so it was assumed that the original would have been fitted with a 12" turntable, and everything else was scaled up from that. On this basis, the horn would have had a 24" flare with a length of 63". For practical reasons it was decided to shorten the horn to 53" and reduce the flare by one inch.

All was now set for building work to commence.

The machine

At the outset, two main requirements were decided upon. Firstly, assembly and dismantling of the whole machine must be easily achievable without the need for tools of any kind. Secondly, there was a wish for the machine to be 'right first time' and to work without the need for any modifications apart from initial setting up. To this end, great care was taken that all of the components were parallel, true and square to one another.

The main components are listed below and unless otherwise stated, all dimensions are in millimetres.

Cabinet

Open topped, $482 \times 482 \times 210$, in solid and veneered oak. (See Figure 1.)

Motor and accessories

Double spring Garrard, fitted with 12 inch turntable. The spindle is at the motor centre and the winding key is at the back. A screw adjusted speed control is located at the rear of the motor board and there are the usual cups for new and used needles.

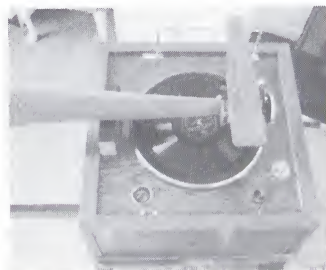


Figure 1. The oak cabinet, displaying 12" turntable, speed control and needle cups, the needle drag arm and part of the exponential horn.

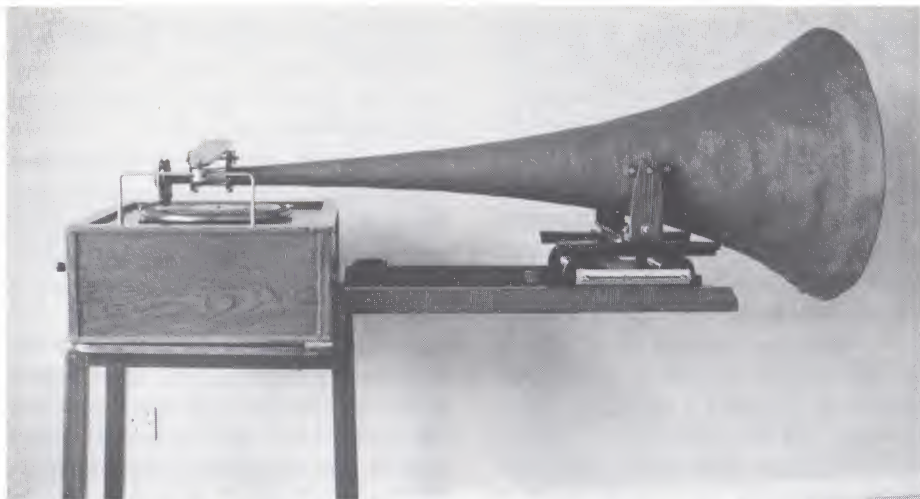


Figure 2. Side view of the completed Balmain gramophone, displaying the exponential horn and its support, resting on the rolling carriage, itself resting on the horn and carriage support arms. At the cabinet, can be seen the steel bar needle drag rail, carrying the needle drag arm, connected to the soundbox end of the horn.

Horn and carriage support arms

These consist of two oak beams, $20 \times 48 \times 1220$, fastened together at their lower edges on 280 centres. The front of the arm carries the steel rails upon which the horn carriage wheels are located, and the rear enters the front of the cabinet at low level to engage with two notches at the cabinet rear.

The rails are 370 long, 0.050" thick, and located on 180 centres. (See Figure 3.)

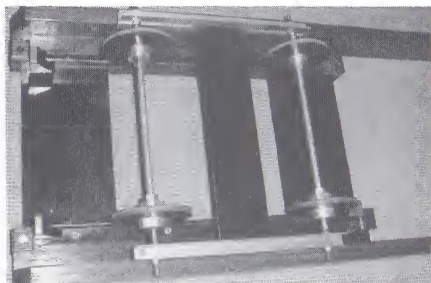


Figure 3. Top view of the horn and carriage support, with the rolling carriage in place on the rails, and the horn and horn support removed.

Horn carriage

The carriage has two vertical arms of 62×6 oak, which end in U-shaped cut-outs to receive the horn support pivots. They are attached together at their lower ends by similar material on 280 centres with a single centre bolt fixing to the upper steel rail tracks.

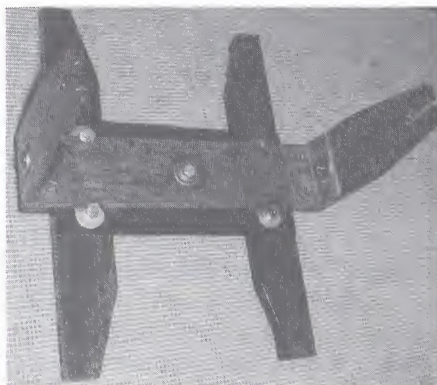


Figure 4. Top view of the horn carriage, showing the U-shaped cutouts on the vertical arms, and the centre bolt fixing to the steel rails underneath.

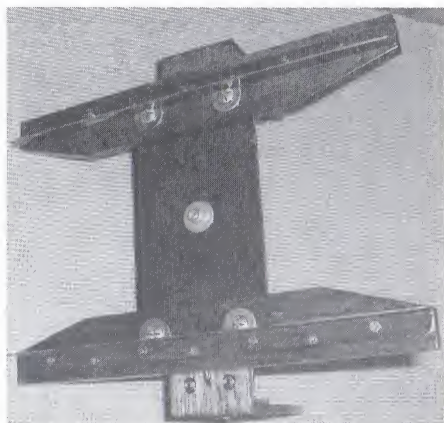


Figure 5. The underside of the horn carriage, showing the upper rails, which rest on the rolling carriage.

The upper rails are exactly similar to the lower ones already described. They are attached to 52×12 oak strips held together at their centre by a single piece of Tufnol, 100×3 , which permits the rails to twist by a small amount, independently of each other. This feature caters for small assembly errors in wheels and rails.

Tufnol is a paper resin laminate which has been available for many years, so its use is not out of place on the Balmain.

Needle drag rail

This is a $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel round bar bent to form two uprights which plug into old 30 amp. brass sockets fitted to the side of the motor board. (See Figure 1.) The horizontal running section is covered with black heat shrink tube to prevent vibration.

Needle drag arm

The arm is made from 62×6 oak and attached to its underside is a counterweight at one end and a free running aluminium wheel at the other.

The wheel has a square section machined groove which engages with the needle drag rail. The rail wheel and horn pivot point are on a common centre line which is parallel to the turntable face.

The arm rests at its centre of gravity on the top of the horn by means of a pivot support attached by two split 6mm oak clamps. The pivot pin is a 5mm round steel bar parallel to the record face when the machine is in use.



Figure 6. The needle drag arm (seen from the underside), showing the needle drag rail wheel at the left end.

The rolling carriage

A considerable amount of thought and discussion was expended upon ways and means of providing near-frictionless horn transport.

The first thought was a 'wheelbarrow' arrangement using a load-bearing axle, two wheels on rails and a rigid attachment to the horn. The main objection to this scheme is that the horn could not rotate on its centre of gravity and the performance on bent records would probably be unsatisfactory.

So a four-wheeled carriage with load-bearing axles was considered, but in the end there was not enough confidence to proceed with the investment in time and machining required for precision bearings, each of which would have to carry a load of about one kilogram.

Rolling balls in angle troughs was another idea pursued in depth, but the balls would have to be not less than about one inch in diameter and perfectly spherical. It is thought that this idea would work but requires perfect troughs above and below, and would be difficult to make 'user-friendly'.

It was a natural progression from rolling balls to rolling wheels on rails, and this was the answer.

The arrangement consists of four grooved wheels of 75 diameter made from quarter-inch Tufnol on a 190 wheelbase. Each pair of wheels is rigidly fixed to an 8mm shaft with needle-point bearings at each end, enabling the wheels to be located within a lightweight frame so that the axle loading is negligible.

The wheels, rails and axles must fit precisely together, and to this end the wheels were machined after final fit to the 8mm shaft. The result has been entirely satisfactory.

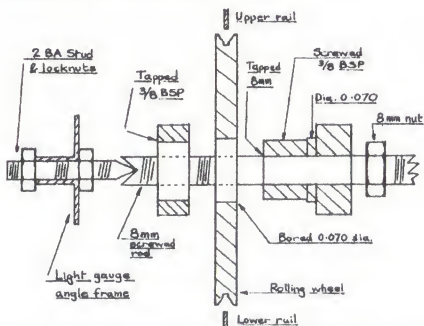


Figure 7. Diagram for the rolling wheel assembly.

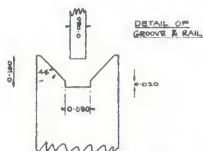


Figure 8. Groove and wheel detail.

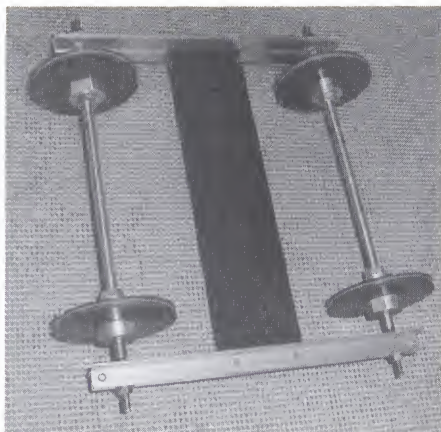


Figure 9. The rolling carriage, complete.

Horn fitments

Mating pairs of small oak clamps are held together on either side of the horn at its centre of gravity and carry a slotted plate on their outsides for positioning the horn in its carriage.

The pivots are 6mm steel pins which are held in the slots by locknuts.

The soundbox connection takes an HMV 5a soundbox and is made from 20mm steel tube pressed into the horn with epoxy resin adhesive.

The needle drag arm split clamps also enclose this tube, so it is very rigidly held.

The counterweight

The Balmain is very 'front heavy' and as a record is played becomes even more so. To enable the machine to operate from a small table a removable steel weight of about 10lb is fitted through the underside of the cabinet rear. It is held in place by two 6mm finger screws.

Manufacture of the horn

The horn is built up as described below on the mould frame, the making of which

was described in Part 1 of this article, see HILLANDALE NEWS, no. 231, pp.133-137].

The horn is made up from multiple layers of lining paper, 0.010" thick, as used in home decorating. The adhesive is standard indoor grade PVA, diluted one part water with two parts glue, applied to the horn surface by brush.

Starting from a position of zero knowledge, the first attempt involved using short pieces of paper about two inches wide laid on in a random pattern. Appearance was poor and thickness control difficult, so this method was soon abandoned.

Longer tapes of the same width were then spiralled onto the mould, starting with a half lap overlay, but the spiral rapidly expanded out of control, and this method is not recommended.

It was time to look at the mathematics of the horn shape, for a better solution. Why did a paper tape go into a runaway spiral after about three turns?

Consider any point on the curvature of the horn and draw a tangential line through it extended back until it crosses the horn centre line. A right-angled triangle is produced which has as its upright the horn radius (half diameter) and the longest side (hypotenuse) is provided by the tangential line. The angle which this line makes with the horn centre line is obtained by the simple adaptation of the horn formula described in the previous issue of HILLANDALE NEWS, i.e.,

$$D = 20 \times e^{(L \div 400)}$$

and the tangent of the angle is –

$$20 \div 2 \div 400 \times e^{(L \div 400)}.$$

Use of a calculator or a tangent table will then provide the angle, which when combined with the radius gives the length of the hypotenuse. This length becomes the radius for cutting a curved paper tape which forms a perfect circle around the horn at the chosen point, or it can be spiralled without 'running away'.

The only point on the horn where the cutting radius needs to be exact is at the outlet end, so as to form a neat, square lip, 495 being the correct figure for a horn of length 1350.

This method is very tolerant on radius values – over the range 400 to 1200 from the inlet end, radii of 450 may be used throughout. From zero to 500 radii fall from 600 to 450, roughly in proportion to length from the inlet end.

Tapes are best cut across the width of the roll using a cardboard template cut to shape. Use the same radius on both edges of the template and make it no more than 90 wide.

Move the template down the roll one width at a time and mark out a succession of curved parallel lines. Cutting roughly along these lines will produce curved tapes about 22" long and there will be no waste pieces.

The first layer of paper on the mould is the most critical: wrinkles and bumps at this stage being simply repeated as new layers are added.

Stop the first layer about an inch short of the outlet end so that after it has dried it may be pushed up the mould to make a tight fit.

Make the first layer by half lapping the papers together and try to avoid gluing the mould surface. A layer of cling film might be useful at this point.

When the layer is satisfactory, build up the inlet end first and then Jubilee clip it to the pipe so that it cannot slip down. Build up the body by immersing about ten tapes at a time in a bucket of water for about half a minute and then hang them over a pole to drain. Glue the surface of the mould with the 2:1 glue/water mix using a 2" brush and lay the wetted tapes half lapped over each other in an even fashion. Wear rubber gloves and smooth the tapes down with hand pressure.

Twenty layers of paper produces a strong and rigid horn and it is suggested that a few extra layers be added at the narrow end for added strength.

As many as five layers may be added at each session, then set the mould rotation into motion as described in Part 1 of this article. Position a fan heater to blow air along the moulding and if the weather is cool, give it 15 minutes at 1 kilowatt for initial drying. Leave overnight in a cool airstream with the horn rotating.

Final appearance may be improved as follows. Use parallel bands of tape, 50 wide, half lapped on the first half from the inlet end. The other half of the length should be covered with lengthwise strips cut to the correct shape, achieved by calculation, as follows.

Calculate the diameter at about five points from halfway to the large end and multiply them by π (3.14) to obtain circumferences. Share these by 14, or any other chosen figure, to produce a cardboard template in a symmetrical horn shape. Remember that the template length must correspond to the horn surface length, not the distance along the centre line, so measure each diameter

point with a tape measure along the horn surface.

Use the template to cut out 28 horn shapes and apply them lengthwise using the same process as with the body. Lay the first one in place by eye, parallel to the horn centre line then half lap the next one over it. A pencilled centre line on each piece helps positioning and the result is one of pleasing symmetry, appearing as a series of straight lines along the horn length.

Repeat this process on the inside surface of the horn and bear in mind that this process adds a further four layers.

After a further 24 hours the horn may be removed from the mould and stood in a warm, dry room for at least a week. During this time its weight will fall by not less than 10%.

Quantities

The heavy duty lining paper is sold as four standard rolls in one, and one of these should be purchased.

The horn described has a finished volume of about 3.65 litres for a thickness of 5mm, and an external surface area of 0.75 square metres.

About 3 litres of glue is required and the final dry weight was a little over 3 kilograms.

The theoretical centre of gravity occurs 70% from the inlet end, i.e., 940mm, but final balance is best done over a sharp edge.

A useful afterthought

The final lengthwise papers worked so well that it is the author's intention to use this method for a future first layer.

Finishing touches

The horn was painted with two coats of good quality eggshell finish dark green emulsion paint. The cabinet and oak fittings were given one rubbing with medium oak naphtha stain followed by two coats of two-pack clear gloss polyurethane lacquer. Read the lacquer maker's instructions carefully before mixing an application and obey them fully.

Testing time

On a morning in late May, four months after work had begun, the component parts were assembled together and the needle tip static load adjusted to 160gm. With a loud tone needle and the speed set to 78rpm, the Lew Stone recording of

Oklahoma, sung by Dolores Gray, was placed on the turntable.

Success.

The music was incredibly loud with the bass notes particularly strong, the test being carried out in an outdoor workshop with one door open. Shortly afterwards the local postman arrived and said he had heard the music from an adjacent street, about 100 yards distant.

Tests were carried out on bent and eccentric records and there were no problems.

As a convenience, a small instrument pattern spirit level was fastened to the horn carriage support arm. Levelling the machine before use is easily achieved and the Balmain will play with the horn ascending a shallow incline.

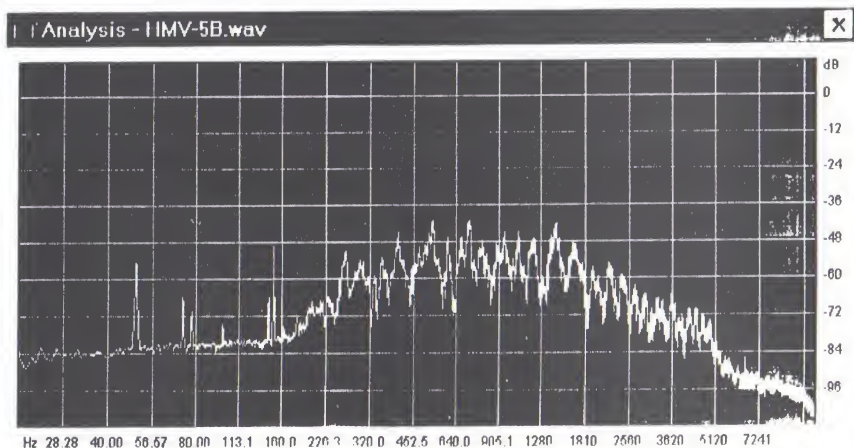


Figure 10. The frequency response curve of the Balmain gramophone, displayed on the logarithmic scale, and measured as described.

Measured performance

An industrial grade sound power measurement meter, set to the 'A' weighting scale, was used to indicate noise levels at the horn centre where the horn diameter was 600mm. HMV record

B.10877, *The Dam Busters March*, was played through an HMV 5b soundbox fitted with a loud tone needle and a peak level of 111dB was recorded.

...concluded on page 199.

Cannibalism is Alive and Well in Greater Manchester!

by Paul Royal

A couple of years ago I went to an antique fair at a local hotel, and amongst all the 'rubbish' (sorry, antiques!) was an HMV 109 – or so I thought. On opening the lid, I was hit by the most 'breath-taking stench' I have ever smelt, and found I was looking into an empty, wallpaper-lined box, which I assume had been used for many years for knitting/sewing or some such use by a lady who liked cheap scent!

I knew I had some spare parts at home and decided to buy the case if the price was right. (I already owned a proper 109). I bought the 'box' quite cheaply in the end, and took it home, 'stinking' my car out!

I immediately ripped the wallpaper out and cleaned up the case, which apart from having been stripped of all equipment, was in excellent condition, even to the 'Trade Mark' transfer. I also got rid of that dreadful smell! I needed, first of all, a motor board and knew I had part of an old wardrobe in the shed. To my delight, the 'oak' blockboard was the right thickness and colour to my requirements. So this was quickly cut to size.

I had a Garrard 20 motor from a partly dismantled 1955 portable of uncertain make, complete with handle, chromed speed changer, etc. The motor board was marked out and the motor fitted, handle lined up on the side of the case, drilled and fitted with its chrome escutcheon.

Two needle bowls were fitted into the motor board and the whole fitted into the case. So much for the Turntable Side.

My problem now was the Sound Side – although I had a spare tone arm and soundbox, again of very uncertain manufacture, I didn't see how I could make the acoustic horn assembly myself. At this point, I decided to make it a 'Wind-up Electric' machine.

I had acquired two HMV electric machines very cheaply some years before, and had made one decent one out of the two, which I now use regularly (a Model 2100 of 1939, approximately). I therefore had a spare electric tone arm and fittings. This tone arm was correctly lined up and fitted to the motor board also, and tracked freely.

I now turned my attention to the amplification. Again, I knew I had a partly dismantled 'Dansette' from the 1960s, which didn't work apart from the amplifier. I took the amp. out and powered it with a 12 volt transformer/plug from a redundant battery charger. The amp. and speaker were fitted to a piece of plywood which I covered in green cloth, which looks quite appropriate to the period. This assembly was screwed to the front of the cabinet behind the two front doors which close over it. Two 1930s bakelite radio knobs (for tone and volume) were acquired and fitted (the chromed plastic ones off the Dansette looked too modern). Everything



Figure 1. The 'Wind-up Electric 109'.

was wired up and found to be working better than I could have hoped for, and all the bits left were thrown onto the local tip, which gave me more room in my shed!

With the lid and doors closed, the machine looks like a standard '109' which winds up, but now plays electrically. Everyone who has heard it including some of the Northern Group members think it sounds superb, and agree I have done an excellent job in bringing an 'empty box' back to life. Of course, purists will throw up their hands in horror, but as I already have a 'proper 109', I am not bothered, and use the machine regularly.

'Cannibalism is indeed alive and well in Greater Manchester!' ■

The Balmain Gramophone, part 2; by Peter Heath – (continued from page 197)

This figure corresponds to 0.126 watts per square metre and the outlet area through which it emerged was 0.283m^2 , so the calculated peak output was 0.036 watts.

The Balmain design provides an ideal test facility for any soundbox, because the force applied to the diaphragm acts directly along the centre line of a mass of almost 4 kilograms. This means that only the diaphragm moves and no energy is lost in reaction to a tone arm.

A commercial grade moving coil microphone was used to record 50 seconds of classical music from a mint

condition record and the result was analysed over the range, 0-11kHz on a computer programme which printed out both logarithmic and linear frequency responses. One of these is reprinted here for the 5b soundbox, and it is worth comparing this with the HMV illustration at the back of their 1928 catalogue. ■

Acknowledgements.

The Balmain project was very much a team effort from the beginning and the author would like to thank the following contributors –

Frank James, whose researches made it all possible;
John Belfield, for the computer services;
Jack Hartley, for materials and help throughout;
John Rodgers, for specialist mechanical advice and machining work;
Holmfirth Antiques, for the Garrard motor, complete with all accessories.

Choosing a Gramophone

by Ivor Abelson

Summary

At a meeting of the British Vintage Wireless Society, the suggestion was made that my findings were best summarised for the benefit of those wanting to know what they were, without having to wade through the details of how the findings were made. This seems an idea worth following up, as follows –

Portables

The loudest – the HMV 102, and the version with the no. 16 soundbox is said to be the loudest variant. My individual choice on the basis of relaxed listening – the HMV 101 with the no. 4 soundbox.

For the best sound in live music comparisons, the post-amalgamation Columbia machines – the first choice, the 211M; second choice, the 204E.

For the steadiest motor, the 109A, using the large Columbia 5 motor. Alas, this means the horn is tiny. Otherwise, there are motor speed stability problems even after good overhaul. Worse stability occurs with thorn needles.

The Modified HMV 103 is claimed to be the portable of choice if closing the lid

whilst playing is the requirement.

Fixed Place Machines

The Expert Gramophones were considered preferable to the EMGs, due to the straighter horn, in accordance with Balmain's principles. The Expert Mark 4 was especially liked for vocal reproduction. The HMV saxophone-shaped horn models also have an excellent reputation here.

Of the more readily available and affordable machines, the HMV 130, 145, and 150 – the latter, if fitted with an electric motor as the spring motor was unsatisfactory. Columbias with bifurcated horns were runners-up. The no. 5 motor was preferred to the Garrard type. One listeners' preference was for a 127 with a no. 4 soundbox – said to be 'easier to listen to'.

Tests were made with play-once steel needles as the consistency of thorns was uncertain. BVWS members against thorn/fibre needles claim to have conclusive evidence that wear is worse than with steel needles!

Introduction

Due to good fortune, the opportunity arose to compare a useful number of gramophones and to make a critical comparison of sound quality. The ethos has been directed back in time to the

golden age of 'THE GRAMOPHONE' journal, when the Panel of Experts conducted the reviews. The modern idea of reviewing in the hi-fi journals has much that is lacking compared to the erudite standards of the Panel of Experts, to which these notes attempt to aspire!

The Comparisons

Fixed Place Gramophones

The comparison commenced with a hearing of the EMG Mark 4 against the EMG Mark 9. (Roman numerals are not used as under Lord Woolf's reforms, the policy now is not to use them.) The Mark 4 is of special note as it uses an internal horn, so avoiding what is considered by some to be the visually objectionable external horns typical of EMG and Expert gramophones, and derided by the major gramophone makers. Essentially, the Mark 4 was provided to please mothers and wives who tended to decry the large external horns as ugly, at least, and an eyesore at worst!

Considering what it offers, the Mark 4 seems to have been bad value for money, as the Mark 9, with its massive horn was only £3 or so dearer! Another disadvantage of the Mark 4 was the small space in the cabinet above the horn for the motor. This led to the normal use of a rather meagre fixed-speed electric motor, but the example tested had a variable-speed AC/DC Swiss-made motor with a shape that permitted it to go inside the available space. As no version with a spring motor was available to examine, it was impossible to say if the lack of space led to the use of a less-than-the-best spring motor. It must be emphasised that a poor motor is catastrophic of sound quality to anybody with even a moderately keen ear. Even where no irregularity is to be seen on a stroboscope, the ear takes the lead over the eye, and a wavering of pitch is to be observed. The same point arises when checking electrical reproduction with an oscillograph. A two-beam version is used, one being the analogue of the input

signal, the second representing the output signal. Audible irregularity is all too readily heard, but the eye sees no 'glitch' of deviations in the traces until the defect is severe. A further related point is that electrical measurement forms no part of this study as major apparent electrical discrepancies often have no untoward effect on the sound, but small deviations, on the most sophisticated measurement, can effect much audible harm.

Having set the stage, the opera can begin. What was so striking about the Mark 4 was the way voices came across. The effect was especially marked with pre-electric recordings. There was not the least doubt over the massive bass extension of the Mark 9, but for the reproduction of the voice, the Mark 4 was preferred by no fewer than six listeners asked to give an opinion. When another test was made, of Schnabel's performance of Beethoven's First Piano Concerto, the purity of the piano on the Mark 4 was prized, but overall the Mark 9 was now chosen as the best compromise choice.

Further tests included more modern electric recordings where a problem with both EMG and Expert soundboxes was noted. These soundboxes were optimised to the recordings of the time of their manufacture and are put on overload by later modulation levels. The remedy is to reserve a soundbox for more heavily modulated records. The usual choice is the Meltrope. A suggestion to modify an EMG or Expert box to be reserved for late versions of 78s is not welcomed, and no such modified box was available for test. An adapted EMI no. 5 series box was found good but not the best choice. A Columbia 24 with a socket which

fitted the arm, was well liked. It should be noted that more than one fitting is used on the soundboxes all identified as Columbia 24s or marked 'Odeon'.

Today, it is not easy to buy an EMG Mark 4, and a ransom price is likely to be asked. A figure of '£850 and no offers' was heard. The machine was in excellent condition, fitted with a good AC/DC motor, and likely to be physically and functionally preferable to something to be found at auction or in a shop, so arguably it is worth the price asked. Also included were two spare EMG soundboxes, one with an Astra silk diaphragm, and the other with one of Dave Phillips' plastic diaphragms. Neither gave likeable results and the buyer might be best advised to have them returned to originality. There are several craftsmen who can rebuild, to a proper standard, an EMG or Expert soundbox.

Taking into account the cost and difficulty of buying an EMG Mark 4, attention was paid to easier-to-buy alternatives. Three people suggested that the HMV models with a saxophone-shaped horn were as good as a Mark 4 EMG. This was held to be so despite these models not being of matched impedance format and being fitted with a no. 4 soundbox with a mica diaphragm. At this time, no gramophone of this type was available to be heard, and it was not possible to determine whether those speaking in favour of the saxophone-shaped horn were quoting from each other or each had heard the machines play. There is also scepticism that standards of listening and judgement are consistent, and a strong view exists that listeners have individual priorities, so it is foolhardy to rely on the preferences of

a few individuals. A listening panel is the requirement, and it should have access to live music for comparisons. The opinions expressed relating to the Mark 4 and Mark 9 were based on consensus and with reference to live music, right there in the studio.

The tests were now moved to an area of the market more available to most of us. The reference here was the HMV 130, or in its floor-standing form, the 145. One listener preferred his HMV 127, despite its no. 4 soundbox, and that it was only exponential as regards its horn. A further test with a Columbia 24 soundbox was greeted as an improvement by the majority of the listeners, but the 127 owner was adamant that the original no.4 box was, for him, the correct one. So here we see how opinions differ as to what is the best choice in sound reproduction. It was not possible to say how good was the spring motor in normal 127s, as the machine in the test had an EMI electric motor using a disc armature. This type of motor is said to have been an option in the HMV 150, Sir Edward Elgar's choice, and was available also as an option in the big re-entrants. It is important to note that Sir Edward had the choice of a big re-entrant or an electric reproducer, yet he chose the 150. Insofar as the acoustic components of the 130, the 145, and the 150 are identical, this must be a very strong argument in favour of these models. A 150 has the advantage of a proper 'tap-back' auto-brake like a 102, whilst the older HMV machines had a 'to-and-fro' brake, only operative on records with a 'to-and-fro' run-off groove.

If the listener is concerned over the automatic brake, there are plenty of spare items available, and it is not all that difficult to fit them if a 'tap-back' brake is preferred.

By request, a Columbia 101 with a bifurcated horn was tested. It proved preferable to the HMV 127, but was not liked as much as the 130 or its variants.

The next request was to test some monsters – HMV re-entrants and a big Murdoch and Sons' machine in a magnificent cabinet. It was soon discovered that these machines were made for the snob market, rather in the manner of pianos in opulent cabinets but with a cheap action. The HMV re-entrants were in very austere cabinets not in keeping with their cost. The 193 cost as much as a small Morris or Ford motor car, and perhaps a fifth of the cost of the house where it might be placed. When a customer could buy an EMG Mark 9 for about £20, to spend £100 on a big HMV sounds ridiculous, and if appearances took priority, or the main interest was in the voice, a Mark 4 could be bought for about £3 less. It is strange that The Gramophone Company, which made some of the most elegant cabinets in the industry in earlier days, used such austere cabinets for the re-entrants, but this is a fact and we must face it.

Whilst the big HMV cabinets were deemed austere or even extremely austere, the reverse was said of the Murdoch & Sons machine, a fine example of 1920s, or perhaps earlier, cabinet-makers' craft, with some remarkable Art Deco details. On lifting the lid, the good function of the lid stay was noted, with an adjusting nut to allow the user to set the degree of friction. At

just before the point of closure, the friction was calibrated to reduce, ensuring the lid closed firmly. A large diameter elegant looking soundbox had a knurled rim to the casing, and through the mica diaphragm a gilt back-plate was to be seen. There was no decoupling in the joint to the arm and the connection was unusual by later ideas insofar as the socket was in the arm. The arm was of large diameter and had a pivot on the top with an adjusting screw to get the best compromise between a good seal and low frictional resistance. Nickel plating was of a standard in keeping with the general construction. Near the base of the arm was something that looked like the choke control of a French car of the period – it probably came from the Solex factory but it was marked 'Ton Maître', not Solex. On opening the door at the front, it was not possible to see inside the cabinet as an opaque fabric was behind the grille.

All ears were agog to here how this opulent-looking machine performed. Alas – the sound was meagre, very thin and quite peaky. The choke-like control did alter the sound level but as the sound was so poor, this was considered of no value. So was there a fault? Oh yes, there was, but it was the makers'. There was no horn, save that in the arm, which looked exponential, but it discharged into an empty cabinet! What looked like a choke control really was one – it moved a wooden flap that covered up progressively to almost entirely the outlet from the arm. To see such a wretched lack of any horn in such a splendid-looking cabinet was a surprise, a shock indeed.

A further surprise was that anybody should have bought this bauble, especially someone who could hold down a job that paid enough to allow such a costly, yet unfunctional object to be bought. Yet, perhaps this is less of a surprise when you think about it. Today, buyers pay massive sums for heavily promoted hi-fi items in elaborate case work but with little to commend in the performance.

A Digression

The opportunity was taken to demonstrate this by comparing a £350 CD machine against a £4000 one. The mid-price machine, although of plainer appearance, was much to be preferred when it came to sound quality! The opportunity was also taken to resolve the question of whether CD was preferable to vinyl. In much of the 1980s, CD was inferior to vinyl, but today a triple test – the 78, the 78 copied onto vinyl, and the 78 copied onto CD, showed just how good the CD has become.

Against this, Mini-Disc was found less good by some, and better by others, than vinyl. DVD was, as it stands at present, disliked by all. R-DAT was very well liked, but its use is very largely confined to studios. Cassette tape was viewed by all as superseded, and only one listener, who brought his Revox along, said he still would choose it as best. Consider here the man who preferred his 127 with its no. 4 soundbox.

There was one remaining surprise relating to the Murdoch machine, that nobody had fitted it with electric

reproducing equipment. Presumably it was left in a large room, where space occupancy was of no concern, as a mere ornament! Possibly it was used as a record storage cabinet or a stand for a table-top electric reproducer, or even a portable gramophone.

One participant raised his voice at this stage. He was a clockmaker and restorer, and he said the term 'clockwork' should never be used of a gramophone motor. To be clockwork, an escapement controlled by a pendulum, balance wheel, or quartz crystal was the *sine qua non* of clockwork. If none of these was there, it was a spring motor, not clockwork!

Portable Gramophones

At a separate session, portable gramophones were considered. The big objection was the inability to close the lid whilst playing. A few older portables had this facility but found no great favour in the market, probably being too bulky and heavy. There was mention of an HMV 103 fitted with a lid catch and a carrying handle and detail modifications to the case, but it was decided that this was not a Hayes job.

So it was asked, how serious was the inability to play with the lid closed? The 130 gave the answer. The lid was opened and the listeners asked how objectionable they found the result. Most said 'acceptable', so portables were brought out to test. The HMV 102 is generally regarded as the 'top dog' of portables, and certainly it was the loudest. Yet roughness was in evidence. The short arm gave rise to poor geometry, and the short internal horn ensured the matching of impedances was very imperfect. Indeed, it was decided that the 130 – 145

– 150 range were the really good examples of matched impedance working. The re-entrant horns had a depth of bass where impedance matching ran out, and in the 102 it never really took effect. This is of course, opinion, not measured fact, and perhaps readers who have taken measurements, or have used reliable mathematical analogues, can come up with factual data.

The 101 was tested, and it was favoured by the man who brought it, and who also owned the 127. Undoubtedly, the ‘sound signatures’ of these machines were very much to his taste, but the BBC dictum about accurate reproduction or a good tone, a pleasant tone, or a nice tone, applies. It has to be accepted that very many listeners do not want accuracy, and some even hate it.

In every portable machine tested, the main complaint was the inadequacy of the spring motor. One remedy was to keep winding the handle during play. Another, a less musically correct one, was to run at half a semitone sharp, then, as the motor speed dropped on heavy modulation, the intonation would come practically correct, so the lack of speed constancy became less offensive.

In the 1930s, the Nazis arranged for Dual to make a portable with both a spring and an electric motor. At least one came into this country as a ‘prize of war’, and its spring function was exceptionally good for a portable. However, its electric motor had defied de-nazification, and it refused to work for an Englishman! Its acoustic system looked very much like that of an HMV 101, and the sound was very good, although not of the best – the HMV 102 was preferred. It is unlikely that an example will be found for sale in

the UK, but, if visiting Germany, it is well worth looking for one.

Testing of portables continued and was most interesting and informative. Whilst it would have been more complete to test a machine with a lid that would close, none was available to try. Possibly the best chance was for the Modified HMV 103 fitted with a lid catch and a carrying handle. Even one of these could not be found, but an unmodified 103 would give the same standard of sound, views upon which differed. Those in favour of it, said it was midway between the 127 and the 130; some said it was a little better than the HMV 109, a smaller version of the 127. No complaint was made concerning the motor, so it may well be that the modified-to-portable 103, if the work has been done well, is a good choice. In the nature of dealers’ pricing policy, price should be quite low, taking into account the view of a leading dealer on the value of a 127 with a Hayes-fitted electric motor, and therefore considered a not truly original machine! If the 103 were a Hayes special, this would be the dearest choice, one modified at Hayes, the next dearest, and one modified elsewhere should be really cheap.

For reasons of availability, testing was confined to two HMV models, four Columbias, and one Decca nursery-style machine. The Decca was tested first, and the single decision was that it was better than the 101 with the no. 4 soundbox. The price was high, due to the nursery decoration, and also that due to flimsy construction, few Deccas from the 1930s have survived. It is easier to find an older Decca with a reflex horn in the lid, yet no example was available for the tests. If

one comes to hand, it will be reviewed in a later contribution.

Two Columbias from the 1920s were tested. The most elaborate was the 112, made in the early 1920s. To keep the cabinet slim, the arm descended into the mouth of the horn when the lid was closed. The horn used bifurcated construction but was compromised from that in the fixed-place Columbias in order to save space. The winding-handle was captive and folded back into a recess in the cabinet, a much-appreciated feature. There was no agreement over the needle cup capping. The cap was attached to the lid, and, when the lid was closed, so was the needle cup. The objection was raised that if you moved the machine with the lid open, a spillage of needles could result. There is an answer – keep the main supply of needles in the box, and just put half a dozen or so in the cup. No price was available for this machine, but it looked expensively made. Those who know or can find out the price are invited to say what it was. Despite the costly format, there was no cup for used needles and this seems true of all portables. No doubt, in the open air or on a boat, the used needles were simply dumped. The Useless Eustace cartoon in the *Daily Mirror* comes to mind, where Eustace, as a barefoot sailor, lands on a desert island and when he gets needles stuck in his feet, says that this must be where the castaway has an inexhaustible supply of needles, a by-line from the early presentations of the radio programme, *Desert Island Discs*. The other way of dealing with used needles was to drop them down the horn and, from time to time, tip them out into the bin. There was no auto-brake, but this was the way

things were before braking grooves were inscribed on records.

Alas, the sound was mediocre, not as good as the HMV 101. The soundbox was checked by trying it on a fixed-place machine, and found to be good. A point of objection was the heavy, die-cast arm, and the flat areas on the bends, claimed to assist the passage of the sound, were ridiculed. So then, an opulent portable, but not an excellent one.

Moving forward in time, the very much simpler and cheaper-looking 109A. Any information on price here would be welcome. The arm was a lighter casting than that of the 112 and has a reputation for crumbling, but the example tested had no sign of this fault. The soundbox was a Columbia Odeon, no number, which looks in the main like a 24, but had far better decoupling. The horn was short and of a reflex format, directing the sound against the parabolic reflector occupying the full width of the cabinet.

Results were as must be expected from the small horn – mediocre. The winding handle and needle cup cover were as on the 112. Despite their mediocre performance, these originally cheap 109s command a good price, little below that for an HMV 101. Possibly the winding handle and the Odeon soundbox attract interest.

Two post-amalgamation Columbias were examined. Neither had the tuck-away handle, and only the obviously cheaper 211 had the traditional Columbia needle cup cover. The dearer 204 had the EMI needle holder as used on the HMV 101 and 102. The platter was plainly an EMI type, and true to EMI practice, the model number and serial number were on an ivory plate under the platter. Both

machines had excellent automatic brakes, of the type fitted to such fixed place machines as the Columbia 101. On the 204, the automatic brake could be de-activated by lifting a plunger, a very much simpler arrangement than the HMV lever. The 211 had no such plunger, but with care it is possible to place the brake operating lever to enable a small diameter record to be played. It was to this end that EMI provided a means to de-activate the automatic brake. The 204 has also a manual brake: the 211 has not. Another difference is the smaller platter of the 211. This causes no harm in practice with shellac records, but might be a problem if flexible records are to be played. Both had the type 24 soundboxes. They used an identical motor, of lighter construction than used in HMV portables 101 and 102. But at least one less costly portable was made under the HMV trademark which might have used this lighter motor. It would have been interesting to test one of the cheap HMVs, but none could be found for testing. It was felt the lightweight motor was as good as the heavier types.

The 204 has a saxophone-shaped horn discharging across the cabinet on to a reflector which directs the sound on to a second larger reflector, which further directs the sound upwards on to the lid which then directs the sound towards the listener. The motor is within the sound passageway – not considered a good idea, yet it seems a practical one.

A Second Digression

It might sound pedantic to put 'shape' after saxophone in the description, but Adolphe Saxe died aged 80 in 1894, and there is no record of his association with

any gramophone manufacturer, so he could not be the designer of any horn for any gramophone! You cannot abbreviate to 'Saxhorn' as Saxe developed a family of Saxhorns, of which today we only hear his flügelhorn on the band stage.

Listening tests showed the 204 to be decisively better than the HMV 102. The latter was louder but distortion was less on the 204, and the bass more extended and sure. There was a holographic effect as singers and instrumentalists seemed to rise out of the horn mouth and to be on a stage above the body of the machine. This applied with electrical recordings, and was even more striking than the stereophonic staging heard in the mouth of the horn when playing pre-electric records. Possibly the sound from the soundbox diaphragm combining with the sound from the horn gave the effect. The inferior bass in the HMV 102 could only be ascribed to the less competent horn, and that the claimed matched impedance principle was badly degraded in this quite short horn. The no. 5 soundbox shows its merit in such machines as the 130 or, in its small socket form, on the 101 and 127, although for the latter, the Columbia 24 soundbox is to be preferred. So an obvious culprit is the very poor arm geometry of the 102.

The 211 came up for testing as the concluding job. Results were astoundingly good, even better than the 204. The holographic effect was more marked. It was decided to find the reason, if possible. The soundbox was tested on a Columbia 101 machine and found to be of normal performance, so nothing special here. The swivel, where

the arm joins the horn was cheap – no ball race – and the joint made airtight, perhaps more so than with a ball race, with grease. Resistance to movement was greater than with a ball race, but no doubt the EMI engineers found it acceptable. The horn used the double reflex principle of the 204, but was much simplified. No saxophone shape, but an exponential length going straight and impinging on a reflector along the front of the cabinet. It looks as though lessons had been learnt about reflex horns from the relatively poor performance of the old 109. The taboo against putting the motor in the path of the sound waves was discarded so the full length of the cabinet could accommodate the horn now.

If the good performance of the 211 is not more than enough to encourage the portable seeker to look for this model, then consider low weight. It is the lightest of the machines tested. It also has the straightest of any of the horns, an honour it shares with the 109, although the latter has too short a horn to be good enough.

This favourable finding for the horn to be as straight as possible brings into context the arguments between Balmain and Percy Wilson. Balmain said a horn must be straight for best results and any bends or curves harmed the reproduction. Later Paul Voigt and Stanley Kelly endorsed Balmain's views. Percy Wilson said that commercial realism called for curves and bends if the horn was to be visually acceptable. He expresses this view in hardware in the horns he designed for EMG and Expert Gramophones. When asked, he replied that bends and curves must do harm, but it was not significant.

He did not call for the slavish elimination of curves and bends or even for them to be simplified or eliminated in defiance of commercial *desiderata*. Yet it is accepted that the simpler, yet visually less appealing shape of the Expert horn produces a better result. See on this, James, *The EMG Story*, p.49. For an illustration of the curves of the EMG horn, see pp.60/61, and for the straighter and more austere-looking Expert horn, see p.56. The horn wars are discussed on p.56 too, but it is not clear if Expert ever offered their horn as a 'spare' to be fitted to an EMG machine to improve it.

In a later article, it is intended to deal with choice of needles, thorn and fibre on the one hand, common steel, long-play steel, and trailer, on the other.

Views on electrical reproduction will be explored and the question of why so very many serious listeners, including a leading ENT surgeon, prefer the gramophone to all the apparent advantages of electrical reproduction, will be examined. ■

Addendum

Howard Hope reports that Hayes made a portable variant of the HMV 130 for the Indian market. He says such a machine would sound far better than a 103, but would be very much heavier.

There is interest in this country in modifying a 130 as a portable. For an audiologist who wishes to have a gramophone of good performance he can take around with him without too much trouble, the modification of a 130 seems a good idea.

Thoughts on Vinyl Record Care

by Reg Williamson

There must, I suppose, be the musical equivalent of a bookworm – the type who spends most of his or her time browsing around used bookshops in the hope of picking up some stimulating bargain. Anyway, whatever we are called – I was one. Ever since I got ‘into’ music back in my teens, my intellectual appetite has always sought interesting music, for example, from the day-to-day diet permanently offered by radio, and that other main source of serendipitous delights, the used record shop. I can honestly say that my musical education profited from those forays into the used record market.

It had, of course, problems. Obscure music on equally obscure labels had a habit of appearing, then disappearing the next day. Unless you were sharp off the mark in picking up an unused copy from the company’s first issue, it would in time have passed more often than not through less considerate hands than your own, so if you wanted to enjoy the contents, then your hi-fi sights had to be lowered somewhat.

This isn’t to say, however, that some attempt could not be made to improve the condition of your acquisition. Sadly, most of the used vinyl discs I acquired looked and sounded as though someone had used them as breakfast plates – so drastic recovery measures were virtually mandatory. So now, I am going to tell you of a method of restoring such records to almost pristine condition, provided they are not worn but simply

badly stored and handled. I do emphasise as well, that it is a lengthy process, so should be reserved for really bad discs only.

PHASE ONE

As they say in the cookery books, ‘first, take your record’ and give it a thorough examination before playing it. If you see little sign of actual wear, but what appears to be no more than a coating of superficial dirt, then try a gentle wipe around with a damp cloth and remove as much as you can. Then play it, not with your best ultra-light-weight pickup cartridge, but one that tracks at around 2-3 gm, and with a conical stylus rather than one of the elliptical variants.

After about three playings of each side during which you’ll have to clean the stylus tip with isopropyl alcohol a number of times, decide whether you think it is clean enough and that the residual background noise is inherent in the recording and not due to gunge remaining in the groove. If you cannot wait that long or you think more drastic treatment is called for, then we go on to the next phase.

PHASE TWO

In essence, this is a method of giving the record a face mask and works on the same principle. The surface is coated with a special inert material – material, that is, that has no effect upon the vinyl from which the record is made. It is applied after being dissolved in an equally harmless solvent; the solvent

dries out, leaving a pliable film that has penetrated deep down into the bottom of the groove. This traps within the plastic film all the most tenacious grit and grime. On removal of the film, the record surface is left in pristine condition; more often than not, if there is negligible wear, with a quieter surface than when it left the pressing plant. You don't believe me? Well, it is absolutely true and I have proved it over and over again in public demonstration. So read on. I'm going to tell you how to make up such a face mask yourself at far less cost.

THE RECIPE

Mixing up a batch of this masking material (a disc facial?) involves dissolving the powdered PVA in a Pyrex beaker or something similar. Take the same precautions you would with any boiling liquid, but preparation should be no more complicated than preparing your morning porridge. Once you have successfully mixed a batch, it will present no problems.

First, the basic material. It is called polyvinyl alcohol, a material that in film form looks like wrapping foil. In fact, it is sometimes used as a packing material when the contents are to be dissolved in water – for that is its other virtue, being solvent in water. Those funny blue thingies you drop in the toilet cistern are wrapped in it. Very unusual, and you can't get anything more inert than H_2O ! Polyvinyl alcohol, or PVA, is used also in the paper industry and is produced by hydrolysing a sticky material, much used in modern glues, called polyvinyl acetate.

Since stickiness is the last quality we need in our PVA, the grade we need is that which is 'fully hydrolysed'. PVA is

available under various trade names and I will quote a few – *Alvyl*, *Gelvatol*, *Mowiol*, *Polyviol*, and *Elvanol*. Sometimes, the degree of hydrolysis is mentioned in a code number which follows the trade name. A second number following will also indicate the degree of viscosity of a 4% aqueous solution in centipoises. Don't worry about the technicalities, but a 90-50 grade will be well hydrolysed and of medium viscosity, in solution about the consistency of warm molasses.

Whilst I have tried a wide variety of PVAs from many commercial sources, the one I have found quite uniform and that gives satisfactory results is the DuPont product *Elvanol*. The grade used is a medium viscosity type 85-82. But I must emphasise that other grades and other makes are likely to be equally suitable and all that may be needed is some slight adjustment to the proportions in solution. So it is worth saying a word or two about that. The limit, I would suggest, is a 10% solution of PVA in water. If this produces, *when cold*, a solution that flows when sufficient ease when you come to brush it on the record surface (I'll be talking about that later) then it is good enough.

Varying the solid to liquid proportions will alter the viscosity, but I don't recommend higher than 10% solids since there is a tendency for it to jellify in solutions stronger than this. It will liquefy quickly when warmed, but jellification can be avoided altogether. Now for the preparation of the solution. Assemble all your materials in a clear working space in the kitchen. Keep your wits about you in preparing the mixture and you should have no problems. In

addition to the PVA you will need glycerin, distilled water, and a photographic wetting agent.

MAKING IT

Put your container or beaker, which should comfortably hold at least 500cc in a saucepan of cold water which will be brought to the boiling point. Pour into the container about 400cc of pure water, not water from the cold water tap. It can be either de-ionised or thawed ice collected next time the freezer is defrosted. It is vitally important that the water has a pH neutrality, since even small degrees of acidity or alkalinity will vary the viscosity quite a lot.

Now add 50gms of PVA which comes as a white to cream powder, adding a little at a time to the cold water while stirring it with a clean spoon or stirring rod. This will prevent clumping of the powder in the water.

Now start to heat the water in the saucepan and stir the mixture continuously as the water heats to boil. The slurry should rise to a temperature of 90-95°C, and as it does will start to dissolve, changing its appearance quite significantly. It will vary from a milky consistency to a clear solution with low viscosity (which will thicken as it cools) and rather depends upon the make. But in any case, be quite sure you don't stop stirring until you are confident that all the free solids are fully dissolved. I might add, you can't over do it.

Allow the dissolved PVA solution to cool after adding enough extra water to bring the total solution to 500cc. Very useful additions are about 10cc of glycerin to make the film more pliable and soft if your make of PVA has a

tendency to stiffness. The 'facial' is easier to apply if a surfactant is added. One of the proprietary brands of photographic wetting agent is useful here (no, a dash of Fairy liquid will *not* do!). And finally, if you can get it, you can add up to 10% of industrial alcohol to the final mixture while it is still warm and of course, stirred thoroughly. This has the virtue of both inhibiting the tendency to jellify and to hasten drying. Again, the actual proportion of alcohol to mixture is rather dependent upon the particular grade of PVA used. The ordinary mineralised grade methylated spirit that one can purchase without licence is not suitable. I'm told that vodka is a good substitute.

When cool, the solution should be either clear or slightly milky and is ready for use. Which brings us finally to the method of application. You now need a small plinth on which you will be supporting the record and no bigger than the record label area. It should be reasonably horizontal, obviously. Keeping the record firm on the plinth with the fingers of one hand, pour a small bead of solution all around the centre of the recorded area. The actual amount comes with practice, but if too much it will take a very long time to dry, and if too little, the resultant film will be too thin and tear on removal. But don't worry if you go wrong the first time, you can repeat the treatment many times. There is no evidence the record is harmed at all.

Anyway, now spread the solution evenly all over the recorded area in a series of gentle circular movements, using I suggest one of the foam-backed paint pads one can get from any home

improvements store. The coating should be well worked into the grooves and taken right up to the label area, finishing with a neat edge. Don't go over the label, though. It is possible after some practice to do both sides, but don't attempt this first time. Leave the record to dry off in a warm, well-ventilated place. I find overnight is good practice. The pad should be rinsed out in warm water and kept in water as well.



Figure 1. Peeling the PVA film away using the masking tape.



Figure 2. The author demonstrates the record cleaning technique at a FRMS Musical Weekend.

Whilst you were buying the paint pad, you could also buy some 1" paper masking tape, because you now need this to remove the dried film – which must be

perfectly dry. Cut off about a 5" length and press it across the coated area from the edge of the label to the edge of the record. Then pull the tape gently away, and with it should come the film as well. It may need a little help with the finger nail on the record edge and if fragments tear off, they may be removed with another piece of adhesive tape. It all comes quite easily with practice. But don't pull the film away quickly.

THE PLAYED RESULT

Next step is obvious: play the disc to see how successful the treatment has been. If my experience is anything to go by, along with that of many other enthusiasts, prepare to be very surprised how effective it has been. I have been amazed at how good records have become, despite the gloomy predictions of the dealer from whom I bought them – with, of course, commensurate low prices.

I hope these thoughts on record care have been helpful because despite current developments in the audio world, the ubiquitous LP is going to be around for a very long while yet, yielding for the likes of you and me more musical delights of discovery. ■

© Reg Williamson, FRMS.

Reg Williamson was Vice-Chairman and Technical Officer to the FRMS for nearly ten years.

For those who wish to follow this technique but can't buy PVA locally, Reg has supplied the name of a firm in New Hampshire who supplies a kit and refills. Write to Audio Electronics, PO Box 876, Peterborough, NH 03458-0876, USA. E-mail at <www.audioXpress.com>. Will take orders on-line by Visa.

WARNING. This technique is **DEFINITELY NOT SUITABLE** for use on shellac records, as the PVA will stick to the shellac, thus effectively obliterating the groove.

The Odyssey of Caroline Hatchard

by Charles A. Hooey



Caroline Hatchard as Rosalinde, in *Die Fledermaus* (photo courtesy of Ewen Langford)

Regulars will recall Ewen Langford's fascinating account¹ of his unusual childhood with a mother who was a famous singer and the strange folks who kept dropping by. They were, of course, Mum's chums from the opera. Here, the intention is to enlarge that picture of the remarkable Caroline Hatchard.

She found main-line stage excitement in the Autumn of 1910 while touring Britain with Thomas Beecham's Opera-Comique Company. His two hits were *Die Fledermaus*, with Caroline a creditable Rosalinde, and *The Tales of Hoffmann*, in which she sang Antonia on occasion, but as Olympia, her star shone brightly. Judge for yourself from these words written in 1910 –

In Blackpool she 'was the essence of daintiness; in Liverpool she sang 'with the greatest sweetness and ease;' in Newcastle she 'executed the decorative cadenzas with conspicuous taste and fluency' while in Belfast 'all the unreal reality of the part was there.'

For that matter in Newcastle, she did not do badly in the other opera, playing *'the indignant Rosalinde with archness and prim propriety, and sang with much beauty.'*

'Caroline Gertrude' was born on 12th October 1883 to George and Lilian Hatchard, whose Portsmouth home already bustled with Lilian Junior, Ethel and Alice. In 1887 they would welcome Isabel but there would be no sons. Music was integral to four girls with only Alice missing out. Surprisingly, neither Lilian nor George (a supervisor with the telegraph authority) knew music at all. The older pair took readily to instruments

while both Caroline and Isabel sang, but Caroline's voice reigned supreme.

Victorian parents, as a rule, viewed the stage as a prelude to Hell, but the enlightened Hatchards would not deny Caroline her chance. With local businessman 'Uncle' Albert Holly's help, they ushered their 18-year-old into the Royal Academy of Music in London on 24th September 1900. Madame Agnes Larcom, teacher *très formidable*, was waiting.

Formerly a soprano, Agnes owed her teaching skills to Manuel Garcia, no less. A 'tough as nails/heart of gold' type, she combined vocal exercises with studies in piano, harmony and diction to produce an all-round vocalist. For Caroline and her natural gift, this approach suited just fine; she soon qualified for the Campbell-Clark scholarship and both the Rutson Memorial and Melba prizes. Caroline and her teacher remained close until Agnes died in the late 1920s.

Henry Wood, who first noticed Caroline's prodigious talent, spotlighted her on his Proms concert of 7th September 1904, allowing her to sing an aria from Mozart's *Magic Flute* and Sullivan's 'Orpheus with his lute'. In all, there were thirteen Proms concerts. Not to be outdone, William Boosey brought her to a Chappell Ballad Concert on 22nd October 1904 to sing 'Thou charming bird' from David's *Perle du Bresil*.

Experience came in Royal Academy concerts at the Queen's Hall, performances of *Elijah*, in Sullivan's *Golden Legend*, and in excerpts of *Faust* with Robert Radford. This meeting led to a long friendship that ended in 1933 when the bass died.

¹ See Ewen Langford: *My Mother, Aunts, Uncles, Friends and Colleagues*; HILLANDALE NEWS, no. 222, Summer 1998, pp.92-99.

Being young, spry, and good looking, musical comedy quickly became an early option. In 1906, she joined the cast of Basil Hood's *Les Merveilleuses* (*The Wonder Women*) at Daly's Theatre, assuming the rôle of Pervenche and appearing intermittently until the show closed the following May.

Out of all this, came the most exciting development of her young career, an audition for the Royal Opera. Not known for favourably viewing homegrown talent, the Garden in this instance, was interested. (First to greet her was Bob Radford.) She made her *début* on 2nd May 1907 as an ideal 'Dew' Fairy in *Hansel and Gretel* and followed on 5th June by singing a charming Shepherd in *Tannhäuser*.

With opera silent, she sang Mariette in *The Three Kisses*, a musical that opened at London's Apollo Theatre on 21st August. Her impish smile and innate sense of comedy gave her an edge on Walter Hyde as Andrea her feisty fisherman. Contrast came on 30th November in Plymouth, as she was the shy damsel in *The Spectre's Bride*, Dvořák's chilling, mini music drama.

At Covent Garden in January 1908, she learned of her involvement in the company's first presentation in English of Wagner's monumental *Ring*. Her rôles included Gerhilde in *Valkyrie*, the Forest Bird in *Siegfried*, Wellgunde in both *Rheingold* and *Twilight of the Gods*, as well the Second Norn in the latter opera. The production earned England new respect within operatic circles world-wide.

The lively newcomer was chosen along with contralto Edna Thornton as English representatives in a pair of resplendent Galas. On 30th April, she helped pay

tribute to Nellie Melba for her brilliant 25 years on the Stage, singing Flora in Act I of *La Traviata* to the grand dame's Violetta. Then, for the Royal Gala on 22nd May, celebrating the signing of the *Entente Cordiale*, she portrayed Siebel in the Garden Scene of *Faust*.

On 6th June she sang both Sidonie and the Naiade in Gluck's *Armide* 'eliciting many complimentary remarks from her hearers'. There were more Siebels, Flora in *La Traviata* with John McCormack and Luisa Tetrazzini, and Kate in *Madame Butterfly* with either Florence Easton or Emmy Destinn. Opera still ringing in her ears, she bumped into Liza Lehmann, the soprano who, in 1896, composed *In a Persian Garden*, achieving near-instant success. She was now eager to present this music with a few of her other songs in several British cities during the Autumn of 1908. Caroline was glad to join Palgrave Turner, Albert Watson and Peter Dawson as the singing contingent. Beforehand, on 8th August in Southwark Cathedral, she married Robert Langford, a government adviser in agricultural matters.

She returned in January to join the Garden's revival of *The Ring*. About this time she began to think what a joy it would be to tackle a major rôle, but none was forthcoming. Indeed, this was virtually an impossibility, as the paying public felt cheated if a local singer chose to set foot upon their precious stage. Talent was not a factor. It was a barrier that could only be breached by an artist succeeding in major fashion in a foreign centre, preferably Italy.

Although he was busy conducting at Covent Garden, Thomas Beecham was always thinking, 'How can I extend opera into every corner of this land?'

Finally, he created an enterprise patterned after the Opéra-Comique in Paris. Lighter fare, more compact productions and young singers would all cost less. This gave Caroline what she wanted, a chance to sing important rôles. No wonder Beecham was viewed as a saviour by many aspiring (and starving) English singers.

Beecham's venture sprang to life at His Majesty's Theatre, London on 12th May 1910 as Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann* was sung in sparkling English. Caroline joined the cast on 7th June after Beecham decided that the rôle of Olympia needed more zest and vigour. That's what she gave it during the twenty-two performances that remained that summer.

In fact, she made her first appearance on 24th May as Kitty in *Shamus O'Brien*, Villiers Stanford's opera that in five outings fairly bubbled with Irish high jinks and humour. Then on 9th July as Walpurg, she sang in the English Première of Richard Strauss' *Feuersnot*, delighting audiences but the musical public at large took no notice. In a single performance of Mozart's *Impresario* on 23rd July, Caroline sang Madame Hertz, a rôle that utilised her Everestian range.

At the end of that Summer, Beecham dispatched his forces afield as mentioned at the outset. Despite her success, she seems more or less to have left the tour at Christmas, no doubt to seek more diverse singing engagements. She may have been fed up being Hoffmann's doll!

On 3rd March 1910, she appeared in Huddersfield in Sullivan's *Martyr of Antioch* with Alfred Heather and Phyllis Lett. Then, on the 11th, in Plymouth she sang in two fine performances of Gounod's *Mors et Vita* with Annie Kirkwood, Frank Mullings and Jamieson

Dodds. 'H. Moreton inspired those under his baton with the spirit of the subject and music, and the result was reverentially impressive and imposing.'

More musical comedy awaited on 19th May at the Whitney Theatre in Aldwych where, as the lovely Countess Lydia, she brightened the stage in *Baron Trenck*, bantering with her cantankerous lover Trenck, played by ever-present Mr. Hyde.

Of more serious portent was the Verdi *Requiem* she sang in Norwich Cathedral on 28th March 1912, for only 300 Kms away in Southampton passengers were gaily boarding the Titanic.

That year the Royal Academy of Music transferred its base to Marylebone Road and celebrated on 22nd June with a concert in its town hall. Honoured graduate Caroline sang three songs of a favourite professor, John McEwen. Beforehand, conductor Sir Alexander MacKenzie's collar stay suddenly popped, the pieces sliding down inside his shirt back. Blushing no doubt, Caroline reached down, retrieved and re-attached the device, thus allowing the concert to begin.

Born a month apart, Caroline and Arnold Bax shared student days at the Royal Academy where she was impressed by his 'new' music. In his autobiography² Bax described 'the princely generosity and selfless enthusiasm of Balfour Gardiner (who) set on foot the most ambitious plan for the encouragement and dissemination of native work that had ever been devised'. Concerts at Queen's Hall presented works by

² See Arnold Bax/edited by Lewis Foreman: *Farewell My Youth, and other writings*; published by Scolar Press, pp.81-83.

Vaughan Williams, Holst, Percy Grainger, Bax and others, providing precious exposure that would not otherwise have occurred. To begin the first series on 11th March 1912, Caroline joined with Carrie Tubb and the London Choral Society in singing *Enchanted Garden* by the resourceful Bax. It was exotic music that really did enchant.

Constant trouble with his players gave the frustrated Gardiner cause to cancel his scheme near the end of 1913. A charming newcomer and quickly a friend to Bax, Bevis Ellis took up the reins in 1914 and fashioned a decent start, but the war brought a halt to his work. Reluctantly, he turned in his baton for a rifle. One day in one of the trenches, a mighty blast shook the ground and Bevis simply disappeared.

Caroline first met Swiss musician/impresario Ernst Denhof in Edinburgh when she sang in his production of Wagner's *Ring*. In 1913, with Beecham's tacit support, Denhof was planning an operatic tour and was anxious that Caroline come along. She agreed. The previous year, Denhof nearly met disaster when he drew too few paying customers. When a like situation loomed, Beecham rushed to Manchester, shut down and sorted out the situation and inserted his own people, before allowing the tour to resume. A *bona fide* success resulted.

This venture meant a huge plum for Caroline. She was cast as Sophia in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Richard Strauss' opera, when, as *The Rose-Bearer*, it was given for the first time in Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Liverpool and Newcastle. Arguably, more Britons enjoyed their first taste of Strauss' remarkable music

during these performances than did those at Covent Garden the previous January during the opera's British *première*.

Caroline also sang Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, the Forest Bird in Wagner's *Siegfried* and Eva in *Die Meistersinger*, each time achieving a level of excellence that must have pleased her. Famed Manchester Guardian critic Samuel Langford (no relation) recognised her brilliance and became her most staunch supporter.

What a dilemma! What to do now? Her success with Olympia, Antonia and Rosalinde, plus the encouragement of her fans and critics, all seemed to point to a career in opera, which was fine. She loved opera! How about singing at Covent Garden again? Not likely as that scene was still caught up with foreign singers. That meant rattling around the islands with a touring company, but she had done enough of that.

A totally different solution was possible if she would consider going to Italy for intense vocal studies and then springboarding into an international opera career.

... to be continued.

ADVERTISEMENT

**The Phonograph Society of N.S.W.
Inc.**

(founded 1973)

For those interested in the historical aspects of recorded sound. A quarterly journal, THE SOUND RECORD, of approximately 40 pages (A5 size) is published and various books, cassettes and other items are available to members at attractive prices. Annual subscription: \$A25, both Australia and Overseas Airmail.. Enquiries to -

**Barry Badham, [REDACTED] Pymble 2073;
Australia**

Book Review

The "CINCH" Record (September 1913 – January 1916)

A History and Discography with Biographical Notes

The "Cinch" Record, as Arthur Badrock and Frank Andrews relate in the historical introduction to their latest discography, was The Gramophone Company's salvo in a price war that brought the cheapest British records down to one shilling and a penny, and some even to just one shilling in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of World War I. At less than half the price of the company's Zonophone Twin Record it was an instant success, competing with other cheap labels such as Edison Bell's 'Winner' and the Columbia Graphophone's 'Phoenix'. Many hundreds of thousands of "Cinches" were bought and enjoyed in the labels' less-than-three year lifespan, leaving many hundreds to survive the ravages of time, be quarried from the seams of shellac in the near-mythical Badrock garage, and reveal their secrets.

Arthur's decades of record sifting are complemented in this little book by Frank's work in the EMI Archive to provide a snapshot of the musical tastes of the bargain-conscious record buyer in the years 1913 to 1916. The Ragtime craze is seen at its height in now sought-after pieces by such as The London Orchestra and the Cinch Military Band, discs that shared the monthly catalogue supplements with largely forgotten popular songs of the time, staid Victorian ballads, Music Hall songs by stars like Gus Elen and the ubiquitous Billy Williams, and patriotic titles recorded for special wartime lists. Despite their low price, the mustard-coloured, later beige labelled Cinches were mostly new recordings rather than reissues, and made at the recently-opened Hayes recording rooms. Cinch publicity material boasted an array of talent newly appearing before the recording

horn, whereas the book's index shows both Gramophone Company regulars under their own names and a variety of pseudonyms, and others whose careers and identities are still uncertain.

Whether you are a student of the history of popular music recordings, a matrix number collector, or, like me, you just love old records and lists of old records, this is a book that should be on your shelves alongside the authors' Winner, Zonophone and Regal discographies. It forms one more piece in the complex jigsaw of early recording history in this country. ■

The "Cinch" Record (September 1913 – January 1916): a history and discography with biographical notes, by Arthur Badrock and Frank Andrews. 58 pages, 21 cm., paperback, ISBN 0-9008-8363-X. Available from the CLPGS Booklist or from Arthur, at [REDACTED] Drayton, NORWICH; NR8 6DT, for £6-60, including postage.

Paul Cleary



Why not visit our Website, at
<www.isdless.uncom>?

CD and Book Review

Round the Town

Transfers of Music Hall recordings, and accompanying fully illustrated 132-page book

The Bear Family box set is out and it is absolutely wonderful. 106 tracks expertly transferred by the master, John R. T. Davies, a 132-page hardback book, colour illustrations, song transcriptions. *"'Tis utterly magnificent, I tell 'ee!"* Shop price will be about the £85 mark, which sounds a lot when you've been used to buying individual CDs, but there's a helluva lot in this superb package. Bite the bullet, buy it, and you'll see what I mean. Quite easily the best Music Hall reissue there has ever been, and, I'm sorry to say (although I hope I'm proved wrong), probably the highest quality Music Hall reissue there ever will be!

The following is a selection of the tracks available in this set –

Charles Coborn – *Two lovely black eyes / The man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo*; **Florrie Forde** – *Medley – For old times' sake / Daisy Bell / Nellie Dean / After the ball*; **Gus Elen** – *'E dunno where 'e are*; **Eugene Stratton** – *Lily of Laguna*; **Dan Leno** – *The Grass Widower*; **Burt Shepard** – *Has anybody seen our cat? / Mary was a housemaid*; **Pat Rafferty** – *How do you Do?*; **Pete Hampton** – *Bill Bailey, won't you please come home?*; **Harry Ford** – *Can't you take my word? / Don't you think you've overstepped the margin?*; **Stanley Kirkby** – *Galloping Major / Following in father's footsteps*; **Joe O'Gorman** – *Bedelia*; **Florrie Forde** – *The Bull & Bush / Oh! Oh! Antonio / Has anyone here seen Kelly? / Hold your hand out, naughty boy*; **George Mozart** – *Callers*; **Vesta Victoria** – *Waiting at the Church / I've told his missus all about him / The next horse I ride on*; **Whit Cunliffe** – *Hello, hello, hello! It's a different girl again*; **Hamilton Hill** – *The Boys' brigade*; **Victoria Monks** – *There's a girl inside / Hullo! Miss London*; **Alice Lloyd** – *You Splash Me and I'll Splash You*; **G. H. Elliott** – *I'se a-waiting for yer Josie / If you should see a dandy coon*; **Billy Williams** – *The Taximeter Car*; **Ella Retford** –

She's a lassie from Lancashire / Ship Ahoy! (All the nice girls love a sailor) / I want a girl / I'm going back to Dixie; **George Formby** – *Funicula / Since I had a go with my Dumb-bells*; **Wilkie Bard** – *Sea Shells / Come up in my balloon*; **Harry Fragon** – *Billy Brown*; **George Lashwood** – *My latchkey / Send for a policeman*; **Happy Fanny Fields** – *The Suffragette*; **Mark Sheridan** – *I do like to be beside the Seaside / Who were you with last night? / They all walk the wibbly wobbly walk*; **Harry Champion** – *Boiled beef and carrots / Henry the Eighth*; **Albert Whelan** – *Fall in & follow me / Casey Jones*; **Vesta Tilley** – *Come and be one of the Midnight Sons / What would the Seaside be without the Ladies*; **Phil Ray** – *Seventeen (My girl is only 17)*; **Little Tich** – *King Ki-Ki / Curiosity*; **Jack Pleasants** – *I'm shy, Mary Ellen, I'm shy / I'm 21 Today / I went a-jazzing*; **Nelson Jackson** – *When Father laid the carpet on the stairs*; **Jock Whiteford** – *Adam was a Scotchman*; **Billy Merson** – *They can't find Kelly / The Spaniard that blighted my life*; **George Bastow** – *Beauty of the Guards*; **Albert Chevalier** – *My old Dutch*; **George Graves** – *Does this shop stock shot socks with spots*; **May Moore Duprez** – *Won't you come, dear, into the park?*; **Chas. R. Whittle** – *Tommy Trouble*; **Marie Lloyd** – *Every little movement has a meaning of its own*; **Fred Earle** – *In the morning*; **Tom Woottwell** – *How dare they?*; **R. G. Knowles** – *That's Philosophy*; **Maidie Scott** – *Father's got a job / The School Strike*; **Arthur Lennard** – *M.A.D.A.M.*; **Ernest Shand** – *Daily Mirror Front Page / Lloyd Jarge*; **George D'Albert** – *Strip the bed and have another look*; **Daisy James** – *Popsy Wopsy*; **Beth Tate** – *Innocent Bessie Brown*; **Frank Leo** – *Waiting for further evidence*; **Ella Shields** – *Burlington Bertie from Bow / Baa Lambs / Show me the way to go home*.

4 CDs, 106 tracks, and 132-page hardback book. £65 to members. To order, or for further details, contact A. Barker, at [REDACTED] MITCHAM, Surrey; CR4 3JG. Telephone – [REDACTED] Cheques, etc. payable to A. Barker.

Peter Dempsey

CD Review

Pandora's Drums

Cylinder Recordings, 1900-1929

Published by **ELECTRONICS WORLD** – Reproduced by Joe Pengelly

When I was asked to review this CD, it came as no surprise to learn that Joe Pengelly was responsible for the cylinder transfers. I have known Joe for a good many years, and on occasions he has kindly sent me taped samples of his updated experiments. Each time, I have been stunned by his achievements, as they are, in my opinion, second to none.

We have now become accustomed to a multitude of fine quality disc transfers to CD and there are many splendid offerings, including much early acoustic material. Unfortunately, cylinder records have been very much neglected, both by CD transferors and collectors of the original artefact. The fragile nature of wax cylinders put off many would-be collectors. Each playing on original equipment progressively destroys the record. Transferring cylinders to tape can present a nightmare to the amateur. These records are often distorted and 'out-of-round', resulting in bumps, rumbling and mis-tracking. Joe has overcome most of these obstacles, and has recently designed multi-purpose cylinder transfer equipment constructed by the University of Plymouth. May I refer those cylinder collectors who dabble with tape transfers to the article written by Joe in **ELECTRONICS WORLD**, October 2000 issue.

Pandora's Drums contains a mixed selection of cylinders, no doubt chosen by Joe to demonstrate just what can be achieved, the result of many years' experimentation. With the exception of one track, all have been transferred from celluloid cylinders, including Lambert and Albany **Indestructibles** amongst the expected Edison **Blue**

Amberols. Artists include Billy Williams, Billy Murray, Ada Jones, Will Oakland, Charles Daab, Stroud Haxton, Walter van Brunt, Francesco Daddi, and the Orchestras of B. A. Rolfe and Johann Strauss.

Of major historic importance is the inclusion of a 1913 Edison **Kinetophone** cylinder. These giant-sized cylinders were made to provide synchronised sound for Edison films. Most collectors have never seen an example of these cylinders, let alone had the opportunity of listening to one. If one regards the **Blue Amberol** as the ultimate in cylinder development, then take a listen to this. The sound quality and individual performances are outstanding.

Another rarity comes in the form of a French **Liorét** cylinder, of the extended length Type #4, having a playing time of over 3½ minutes. This is a French comic song containing anti-British feeling of the time. Englishmen are described 'as walking about like snobs and who go to the ballet only to ogle at the legs of the dancers'.

Many thanks to Joe Pengelly for this splendid CD. Hopefully, he will be forthcoming in producing others, and perhaps some devoted to individual artists such as Peter Dawson and Billy Williams.

CD contains 21 tracks, totalling 72 minutes playing time. Published by **ELECTRONICS WORLD**, all recordings reproduced by Joe Pengelly. Available from Pandora's Drums, Electronics World, Quadrant House, The Quadrant, SUTTON, Surrey; SM2 5AS. Price £11.99 each, plus £1.50 carriage per order in the UK, or £3.00 for overseas orders.

John S. Dales

Reports

London; 15th August 2000

The London group welcomed from north of the border, Mr. Chris Hamilton, for a programme, **'Thanks for the Memory'**, a new title for Chris. The presentation was an evening of nostalgia, reminding us of entertainment available today, only courtesy of Messrs. Edison and Berliner.

- ◇ The dance bands were represented by Ambrose, Jack Hylton, Jack Payne, and –
- ◇ vocalists by Leslie Carew, Eddie Cantor, and Leslie Sarony.

The titles included such favourites as 'Lambeth Walk', 'Grasshoppers Dance', 'Little Lady Make Believe', 'Around the Corner' – a gem from Leslie Sarony, and 'My Brother Makes the Noises for the Talkies' – from the BBC Dance Orchestra, and Jack Payne.

- ◇ The stand-up recitation gave us the one and only Reginald Gardiner, with 'Trains'.
- ◇ For Music Hall, from Scotland – who else but Harry Lauder, with a fine selection on commercially unissued records, of an ENSA concert, World War II – 'Wee Deoch an' Doris', 'I Love a Lassie', 'Sandy McNab', 'Tobermory', 'Hame o' Mine', etc.
- ◇ From the film world, Laurel & Hardy, with their patter, and of course, 'The Dance of the Cuckoos', with orchestra conducted by Van Phillips, on CAX 6486-1, recorded 18 August 1932.
- ◇ From the Theatre, 'The Importance of Being Earnest' – the famous scene in which Lady Bracknell interviews John Worthing, played by Edith Evans and John Gielgud.
- ◇ The Christie Organ of the Regal Cinema, Marble Arch, played by Quentin Maclean, ended the evening, with 'On the Sunny Side of the Street', and 'Meet Me in My Dreams Tonight'.

A very good evening was had by all. Many thanks to the presenter for all the time and effort.

Tom Little

London; 19th September 2000

The London membership gathered at the Swedenborg Centre on Tuesday, 19th September to enjoy a further evening by our Patron, Frank Andrews in his series, **'We Also Have Our Own Records'**.

Frank's previous presentation finished with the letter 'H', so this evening started with the letter 'I' and the 'International Correspondence School', known and loved by Edison enthusiasts everywhere as ICS. Founded in the USA in 1891, it was not until 1903 that three packages of language courses, making use of the Edison Phonograph became available through Edison jobbers. The ICS continued in business in the UK at least until 1985.

Frank then took us through two sets of 'Ideal' records, the first being manufactured by The Sound Recording Co., the second being a bit of a mystery, being a laminated disc with a picture of an Imperial Crown and a Griffin, with the legend 'Ebnoloid (*sic*) for Smoothness Strength and Flexibility'. Frank asked that any members who possessed examples of such discs, to contact him. We progressed through 'Imps', 'Imperials' to 'Impress', the latter being a 10-inch vinyl 78, the example played, Globe Trotting by the Landsdowne Light Orchestra being issued as late as 1961; then on through the 'Industrial Welfare Society' to the 'International Education Society', being a series of lectures distributed by Columbia in the UK from 1928 to 1955.

The letter 'J' was represented by 'Jamco Records', 'James Ching' – a 1950s series of Bach keyboard pieces played on the piano, 'James Quality Recording Co.', Janus

Records', and on through various 'Jazz' appreciation labels to 'John Bull', one of the most notorious of the many different labels that operated the 'tallyman' system, in business between 1909 and 1913. 'John Dewar', the whisky distillers, produced their own flexible picture disc for Christmas 1930, with 'Happy Days Are Here Again' and on the reverse side, 'Wee Deoch an' Doris', sung by Sandy McNab. Rather than play the cover version, Frank played the original by Harry Lauder, from a Victor recording.

I cannot praise these presentations by Frank Andrews enough – they are the essence of what our Society is about, and provide a bedrock of solid research for the benefit of future generations. The delight with which the audience receives them is evidence enough of not only Frank's depth of knowledge, but also of his unique presentational skills. I would urge all members who are able, to attend the next presentation of 'We Also Have Our Own Records'. You will not be disappointed.

Tim Wood-Woolley

London; 17th October 2000

On Tuesday, 17th October in the Swedenborg Centre, Bloomsbury, there was a truly unique evening, when Dr. John Cowley presented '**London is the Place for me**', being a celebration of early topical calypsos performed by migrants to Britain from the English-speaking West Indies from 1948.

On board the MV Empire Windrush, which docked in Tilbury, Essex in 1948 were two calypso singers from Trinidad – Lord Kitchener (Aldwyn Roberts) and Lord Beginner (Egbert Moore), who spearheaded the popularity of West Indian vocal music during the 1950s. Dr. Cowley demonstrated through musical examples, how these singers reflected on their new life in Britain through their topical calypsos.

Dr. Cowley's programme began with an audio clip from a Pathé newsreel recorded around the 21st June 1948, with Lord

Kitchener singing unaccompanied, a brief extract from his song 'London is the Place for me', which he later professionally recorded in 1951. The songs in Dr. Cowley's programme were in many ways of a topical nature, reflecting on the events of the day as they affected the embryo immigrant community. They ranged from the important, such as the 'General Election' by Lord Beginner, issued on Parlophone in March 1950, or 'Victory Test Match', celebrating England versus the West Indies at Lords, and issued on Melodisc, c. August 1950, to the trials and tribulations of using the London Underground by Lord Kitchener in January 1950. It is clear through these songs that the life of a West Indian in London could be harsh, with a cold, damp climate, unfamiliar surroundings and a certain amount of hostility from rapacious landlords and others. All through the hard times, however, Dr. Cowley demonstrated that there was a shaft of optimism in the songs, and the hope that things were getting better for the West Indians as time went by.

This was a fascinating evening and Dr. Cowley was warmly congratulated by the large audience for his enthusiasm for his subject, and for his impeccable research into the topic. A truly unique evening.

Tim Wood-Woolley

Joint Meeting of the Midlands and Northern Groups, Wolverhampton; 11th June 2000 – (Report held over from previous issue)

This year it was the turn of the Midlands Group to be the hosts for this well-established get-together of the two groups. Prior to the commencement of the formal programmes, we enjoyed an excellent buffet lunch, and the caterers were later on, highly praised for their efforts. Local Secretary Phil Bennett welcomed a good attendance from both branches, and gave a brief outline of the programme to follow.

Local Chairman Eddie Dunn was the first speaker, and his subject was 'Sounds of the

Century, Part I', both on cylinder and disc. He covered a wide range of the first 15 years of recording. For the cylinders, he used a top-wind Sylvia 'C' phonograph, progressing eventually to an Edison Opera machine, kindly brought by new member John Adams. The discs were mostly played on the Society's Expert Junior machine, at present in the custody of the Midlands Group.

He commenced with an Edison 2-minute brown wax cylinder of Mr. Gladstone's speech to Thomas Edison. This was made to thank Edison for the gift of an Edison phonograph. However, there is doubt that this 1890 recording is actually the voice of Gladstone — the style of delivery gives one to suppose that it is the voice of an actor!!

A trio of Music Hall artists on cylinder followed — Victoria Monks (1907), Charles Coburn and Kate Carney, the latter two being on Pathé cylinders.

Turning to the more serious side of music, we heard cylinders of —

- ◊ **Leo Slezak** (tenor) — '*E lucevan le stelle*', on a Blue Amberol;
- ◊ **Florencio Constantino** (tenor) — '*Morte d'Otella*', again on Blue Amberol, and one of the very few announced examples;
- ◊ as we were meeting within the boundary of Wolverhampton, Eddie gave us **Maggie Teyte** (soprano), singing 'The Kashmiri Song'. (Maggie Teyte was born in Wolverhampton in 1889.)
- ◊ finally, an Edison Royal Purple cylinder of **Alessandro Bonci** (tenor) — '*Una furtiva lagrima*' from '*Elisir d'Amore*'.

The first example on disc was a 5" Berliner (from ?1889), reputedly of Emile Berliner himself, singing. The only indication on the disc were the words '*Alle Copir-Rechte vorbehalten*'. This was followed up by a 7" Berliner, also from 1889, of a band playing 'God Save the Queen'.

Three Music Hall discs came next —

- ◊ **Wilkie Bard** on 7" G & T, 'O, O, Capital O';
- ◊ **Vesta Victoria** on 7" Zonophone, 'It Didn't Take Long to Come Off'; and
- ◊ **Harry Fay** on 7" Odeon, 'I Wouldn't Leave My Little Wooden Hut For You'.

From the serious side, we heard —

- ◊ **J. W. Myers** on 7" Columbia, 'Because';
- ◊ **Selma Kurz** (soprano) on 7" G & T, in an aria from 'The Masked Ball'. (Here, Eddie drew our attention to her wonderful breath control);
- ◊ **E. Franciso** (pseudonym for Emilio de Gogorza) with 'The Toreador Song' from 'Carmen'. This was an early example of a 10" Pathé disc from 1900.

Two more Music Hall stars concluded the programme —

- ◊ **Florrie Forde** on 10" G & T, 'Down at Rosherville'; and
- ◊ **Harry Ford** on 10" black and silver Columbia, 'The Money I Shall Never Get'.

The second speaker was the representative from the Northern Group, Chairman Gavin Mist. Gavin's subject was the recording and reproduction techniques at the end of the century — in another word — 'now'. His equipment he described as 'state of the art' and as 'the great-grandchildren of original recording'. From banks of modern electronic equipment, we were to hear the results of the incredible strides made by sound reproduction technology.

Gavin explained that the origins of digital recording go back to as early as 1938 when British engineer, Alec Reeves, working in France, developed Pulse Code Modulation (PCM) encoding as a means of overcoming cross-talk problems in trans-Atlantic telephone links. The first digital tape recorder was developed by the Japanese Broadcasting Authority, NHK, in 1969 with a BBC design following in 1971. The first viable digital sound recording was made in Japan in 1972.

In 1978, Philips announced their Compact Disc (CD) system, a joint venture with Sony. The first discs and players appeared in the UK in 1983, although commercial digital recording had begun in 1979.

Among the technical details that Gavin told us are that —

- ◊ there is no physical contact between the pick-up and the playing medium, due to the use of laser technology;
- ◊ compact discs are centre-start, and revolve at 500rpm when playing close to the

disc centre, but at only 200rpm when playing at the edge, i.e., constant linear speed.

An example of a CD from the early 1980s was played – a choir with a song by Hubert Parry. Next we heard a CD from 15 years later of the Royal Northern College Wind Orchestra playing *'Fugue à la gigue'* by Holst. There was an audible improvement in the quality of the latter recording (which employs 20-bit technology) over the former.

By the mid-1990s, recording companies were falling over themselves to issue transfers onto CD from original recordings. Gavin gave us several examples – one notable one being Caruso's *'La donna è mobile'*, originally made in March 1908, and re-issued in December 1932 with an electrically recorded orchestra added. We heard the December 1932 re-issue as transferred onto CD. Other examples were two Sydney Torch light music pieces *'Shooting Star'* and *'On a Spring Note'*, both from the 1940s, and now issued on CD.

Gavin then demonstrated two different digital recording systems – Digital Audio Tape (DAT) and Mini-Disc (MD) using a recording of an organ work by Buxtehude played on a Dutch organ.

The DAT system was originally devised in the mid-1980s in two possible versions: stationary heads (S-DAT) and rotating heads (R-DAT). The latter was adopted as the recording industry standard. Whilst being too expensive for the domestic market, DAT has found a niche in professional and broadcasting studios world-wide.

Gavin played the Buxtehude piece on this rotating-head system, and the result was very impressive.

The mini-disc, launched in 1992, is now gaining popularity. It is about 4cm square and by means of a sophisticated compression system, has a playing time of about 74 minutes. The recordings are erasable and can be used on portable equipment. Pre-recorded material is also being issued on mini-disc.

Gavin played a MD copy of the Buxtehude recording and also a pre-recorded MD from Naxos.

He also made mention of the ill-fated Philips Digital Compact Cassette (DCC) which was intended to replace the familiar original cassette format. As it lacked advantages over the existing cassettes, DCC failed in the marketplace.

The final state of the art development that Gavin demonstrated was 'MP3'. This digital standard enables down-loading from the Internet via a telephone line onto recordable CDs. Also, portable MP3 players are available. Significantly for the record collector, these are the first domestic audio players that do not employ a removable medium – disc, tape, cylinder, etc. We heard the Benny Goodman Trio with *'Who'*, and Ray Noble's American Orchestra with *'Let's Swing It'* played directly from a portable computer's hard disk using suitable software.

A greater contrast of recording and reproduction techniques we have never had before, and the audience was extremely enthusiastic in their appreciation of our two expert speakers from both ends of the recording technology spectrum.

Geoff Howl

Midlands Group, Birmingham; 16th September 2000

In view of the petrol supply problem affecting the country, we managed a creditable attendance to hear a joint programme by Eddie Dunn and Peter Dempsey. The title was *'All Change – A Night of Surprises'*, and more or less in turn, Eddie and Peter gave us a miscellany to suit most musical tastes.

Eddie presented an assortment of operatic 4-minute cylinders on his Amberola 30, and of Music Hall artists on 2-minute cylinders, played on his Swiss open work machine.

Among the operatic items, we heard –

- ◇ the Belgian soprano, **Blanche Arral**, singing the Polonaise from *Mignon*;
- ◇ the Italian tenor, **M. Dupuy** singing the Toreador Song from *Carmen*;
- ◇ **Marie Delna** singing '*Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix*' from *Samson and Delilah*.

Some of the Music Hall pieces were –

- ◇ **Harry Ford** – 'If I Were You';
- ◇ **Alice Hollander** – 'I Wouldn't Leave My Little Wooden Hut For You';
- ◇ **Victoria Monks** – 'I Wish I Had a Pal Like You'.

Peter's assortment, either on 78 or CD, included serious vocal selections, violin solos, jazz and comedy items. Among them, were –

- ◇ **Jelly Roll Morton** – jazz piano solo, 'The Pearls';
 - ◇ **Harry Frasson**, singing 'Billy Brown';
 - ◇ **Nino Martini** (romantic tenor), singing 'Midnight in Paris';
 - ◇ **Ephraim Zimbalist** (violin solo), playing A *Carmen* Fantasy;
 - ◇ the **Tommy Ladnier Orchestra** playing a jazz-influenced version of 'When You and I Were Young, Maggie';
 - ◇ **Gigli**, singing the serenade, '*Millions d'Arlequin*';
 - ◇ **Peter Sellers**, singing 'The Dipso Calypso';
- and the final piece was John McHugh with 'None Shall Sleep'.

A very novel way to present such a variety, which was very well received by the audience.

Geoff Howl

Midlands Group, Annual Phonofair; Wolverhampton, 23rd September 2000

This year, we could only muster 14 stalls (11 stallholders) as against last year's 18 stalls (by 13 stallholders).

However, once again, the majority of the stallholders seemed to be satisfied with their results, and as ever, there was wide range of machines, records, cylinders, catalogues,

books, needle tins and machine parts available. Stallholders came from far and wide – Newport (Shropshire), Northampton, Ledbury, Redditch, Preston – to name some. And as always, it was an ideal 'get-together' day, with something for everyone.

A change of caterers still produced first-class refreshments, and as always, parking is no problem.

The Society's Annual General Meeting [*see Minutes circulated with this issue – Ed.*] was held in a separate room at 3 p.m.

The only sour note – the attendance was down on last year – and those members who failed to support this fair just don't know what they are missing.

Geoff Howl

Northern Group, Alston Hall, Preston; 3rd September 2000

Gavin Mist, in the Chair, welcomed 16 members to a two-part meeting.

The first session was '**Baritones on 78s**', presented by Bill Mayers. Twelve recordings were played on Bill's 'modern' electrical set-up –

- ◇ **Apollo Granforte** – *Si puo, si puo, Signore! Signori!* from *I Pagliacci*, on HMV DB.1044, recorded 12 March 1927;
- ◇ **Louis Bourgeois**, singing a French folk-song on Linguaphone CF9E, recorded c.1930;
- ◇ **Mattia Battistini** – *Di Provenza il mar, il suol* from *La Traviata*, on HMV DB.201, recorded 1911;
- ◇ **Riccardo Stracciari** – *Ideale* (Tosti) on Columbia 7263, recorded 1921;
- ◇ **Gerard Souzay** – *Si, tra i ceppi*, from Handel's *Berenice* on Decca K.2290, recorded 1949;
- ◇ **Robert Couzinou**, singing Fauré's *Les Rameaux* on Polydor 516515 (date unknown)
- ◇ **Gianpiero Malaspina** – *Pieto, rispetto, amore*, from Verdi's *Macbeth*, on Parlophone Odeon RO 30006, recorded 1952;
- ◇ **Willi Domgraf-Fassbaender** (and **Felice Huni-Mihacsek**, soprano) – *Crudel! Perche*

finora, from *Le Nozze di Figaro*, on Decca Polydor CA 8198, recorded 1929;

◇ **Emilio de Gogorza** – *Il balen del suo sorriso*, from *Il Trovatore*, on Victor 74124, recorded 1908;

◇ **Lawrence Tibbett** – *The White Dove* (Lehar) from the film *The Rogue Song*, on HMV DA.1102, recorded 15th January 1930;

◇ **Tito Gobbi** – *Per me giunto e il di supremo*, from *Don Carlo*, on El Voce del Padrone DB.5447, recorded 1942;

◇ **Peter Dawson** – *The Dear Homeland* (Slaughter), on HMV C.1342, recorded 1925.

This was the third in an excellent series by Bill, and once again he presented us with a fine variety of singers and songs, and spoke entertainingly about each of the performers selected.

The second session was another ‘Members’ Own’, this time on the theme of **Memories of Childhood**.

Paul Royal started things off with his memories of the late 1950s, although he was unable to play the 45s that he had brought, since the red record player had been broken by his younger brother thirty years ago. He entertained us with reminiscences of Lonnie Donegan, Cliff Richard and Tommy Steele, plus a seven-year-old Paul Royal.

Other members added their own memories which included Ambrose and his Orchestra, ‘Underneath the Spreading Chestnut Tree’ on Decca, Jack Hylton’s ‘Rhymes’ on Decca, ‘Fire, Fire, Fire’ by Jack Payne on Columbia, ‘Much Fiddling’ from ITMA on Oriole, Arthur Askey’s ‘Run, Rabbit, Run’ on HMV, and Stan Freberg’s version of ‘The Yellow Rose of Texas’. Al Jolson followed with ‘There’s a Rainbow Round My Shoulder’ on Brunswick, and finally, Reginald Gardiner’s ‘Trains’ imitations on Decca.

Contributions came from Bill Ward, Derek Pepperdine, Gavin Mist and John Hopkins, who each explained the personal memories that their choices brought back. The 78s were played on the Chairman’s 104, which gave an excellent, bright sound.

The following week, Sunday, September 10th, members of the Northern Group attended the Vintage Communications Fair at the De Vere Hotel, in Blackpool, where our display, largely by courtesy of Miles Mallinson attracted much interest and, we hope, some new members.

John Hopkins

Vintage Technology Fair, Blackpool; 10th September 2000

The second Vintage Technology Fair took place during the Blackpool Illuminations at the town’s splendid De Vere Hotel. Many Society members braved the Autumnal gales to support the event put on by member John McGlynn and Brian Chesters.

John has reported that public attendances were, at just over 500, within a few of the March event, which was quite satisfactory in view of the worsening fuel crisis in the North West at the time.

Septuagenarian DJ, Clive Garner, from Radio Merseyside took a stall and met many of his listeners. Clive has a radio show twice weekly and plays only 78s! He was horrified to see the steel needles and weighty sound boxes of our machines, and said he wouldn’t let them anywhere near his records, which seemingly enjoy more gentle treatment from the BBC equipment!

Whilst, unfortunately, Richard Taylor’s health prevented him from participating, many other member dealers were there. As always, Jerry Madsen attended, from Minnesota, and John Curry, with his beautifully presented equipment.

John McGlynn had a very pretty Operaphone in the style of a baby grand piano which, surprisingly, he ended up taking back home. Likewise, Brian Chesters with his exceptional Polyphon. Many gramophones and radios did however, find new homes, as witnessed by the steady stream of visitors walking out with smiling faces and arms full!

Those selling records were overwhelmed and surprised by the demand for George Formby

records. They shouldn't have been, however, since George had had a number of homes in the area, and was a regular performer at the Winter Gardens.

On the CLPGS stand, Miles Mallinson kept everybody entertained with the cylinder machine which had tremendous volume and could be heard in the ZOO next door!



The organisers of the Blackpool Fair – John McGlynn (left), Brian Chesters (right) – pose for the camera, with suitable vintage technology in evidence.

John McGlynn

[Editors' Note – The organisers have advised that the next Vintage Technology Fair in Blackpool will be held on Sunday, May 20th, 2001, again at the De Vere Hotel. Pressure of work dictates that they will organise ONE FAIR ONLY next year.]

West of England Group, Exeter; 19th August 2000

Ron Todd entertained a good-sized party of members to a presentation of his collection on the 19th August. Ron lives in a splendid old farmhouse close to Exeter and he has excellent mechanical skills, extending from restoration work on 'our' sort of machines to his beautifully kept Austin Clifton two-seater (plus dickey seat).

Ron paid tribute to the young student at Exeter University who, while teaching Ron's

daughters the guitar, first showed him a phonograph. That student was Howard Hope!

The talk began with some of Ron's musical box collection. This ranged from the 19½" Regina with a most beautiful, full tone to a musical toilet-roll holder which was rather more limited in dynamic range. Ron's Paillard 'Bells in view' treated us to 'Soldiers of the Queen'. Ron has several musical photograph albums but one of them is in absolutely mint condition in its original box. This produced an interesting aside. Ron said that the identity of the 'J.G.M.' stamp on the mechanism of these items is not known. Paul Morris suggested that it might be J. G. Murdoch, who distributed Edison equipment. Over to the historians ...

Next, we had a short organ *intermezzo* on the Celestina organette.

Ron has a good collection of phonographs which he has built up over the years. All of these are well presented and in excellent mechanical condition.

Billy Williams performed 'Tickle me Timothy' on the Home phonograph, from a 'Phoenix' brand cylinder. The Lambertphone was demonstrated with a whistling solo by Jere Sandford, and 'As we parted at the Gate' by Hindemeyer and Chalmers. The blue Pathé was then brought out. I guess that no member of the Society lives closer to Widcombe-in-the-Moor than Ron, so that the choice of 'Uncle Tom Cobley' was totally appropriate.

Dame Clara Butt showed the Decca Portable at its best and introduced the 'operatic finale' with Caruso singing 'O sole mio' and Gigli performing 'Papa Piccolino'.

As a tailpiece, Ron brought out his Stroh Viol. He demonstrated this with a rendering of 'Danny Boy', which was quite recognisable!

We then adjourned the meeting to take an excellent tea. A most enjoyable meeting, which brought out plenty of interesting points for discussion.

Keith Badman

2001 Programmes

For meeting times and venues, see inside front cover

London Meetings

For meetings before June, see inside front cover

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| June 19 th | '2001 A HEN'S TEETH ODYSSEY' – Members and Visitors present, in the new millennium, rare and exotic items associated with recorded sound (a chance to sell, swap, or pass on??) |
| July 17 th | Barry Raynaud – 'THE GEISHA' BY SIDNEY JONES (& OTHERS)
Tim Wood-Woolley – CLAUDIA MUZIO, 'THE VOICE OF THE CENTURY' |
| August 21 st | Tom Little – AN INSTITUTION REMEMBERED |
| September 18 th | Frank Andrews – WE HAVE OUR OWN RECORDS |
| October 16 th | Tony Barker – <i>MUSIC HALL RELATED SUBJECT, TO BE CONFIRMED</i> |
| November 20 th | Howard Hope (Chairman, CLPGS) – <i>SUBJECT TO BE CONFIRMED</i> |
| December 18 th | Traditional Members' Night – Present your own records on the theme of 'OOOOH – IT'S MY FAVOURITE!' |
| January 15 th ,
2002 | Alan Palmer – FACE TO FACE |

Midlands Group

Programme to be announced

Northern Group

For meetings before June, see inside front cover

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| June 17 th | Joint Meeting with the Midlands Group, at Alston Hall, Preston.
Ted Hock – 'ELECTRIC SOUND EMG'.
Midlands Group speaker and subject to be announced |
| July 15 th | PORTABLE PICNIC at Alston Hall |
| September 16 th | Glyn Hughes – WELSH ARTISTS
John Hopkins – AUSTRALIAN ARTISTS |
| November 18 th | John Mayers – FEMALE VOCALISTS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING |

West of England Group

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| June 16 th | ALL-DAY EVENT – Boat trip on the Exeter Ship Canal to the Turf Hotel, Starcross. All CLPGS members welcome! Please book through Paul Morris. |
|-----------------------|--|

Other dates to be announced

Letters

The Centenary Trade Mark Award

It's ironic – and sad – that EMI has garnered the UK's first Centenary Trade Mark Award while, not only did it resist adopting 'HMV' as its trade-mark for eight years (thus the trade-mark is actually only 92 years old in Britain), but has seen fit for more than the past decade to minimise its use. This latter condition, Rupert Hughes told me in 1995, has been occasioned by the fact that EMI presses records in the UK which are sold world-wide, and because EMI doesn't have trade-mark rights world-wide. It therefore felt obliged to discontinue use of the mark so as not to infringe upon the rights of the other two trade-mark proprietors – General Electric Co., and Nippon Victor Co.

I told Rupert that 'HMV' was too important to cause this discontinuance, and that it would be in EMI's best interest to press records incorporating the trade-mark in its many territories (Europe, parts of Australasia, and Africa) while eliminating it only for sales in the areas where it doesn't enjoy rights.

Oliver Berliner;

██████████ Beverly Hills, CA 90213,
USA.

We Also Have Our Own Records

With reference to Dr. G. W. Taylor's recent letter in HILLDALE NEWS no. 231 and George Woolford's response (on behalf of our Bookshop) to the suggested compilation [into a book] of my series of articles 'We Also Have Our Own Records', which appears regularly in the HILLDALE NEWS, I would like members to be clearly aware of my attitude to that proposal and that my tentative agreement to do so was very nebulous in the extreme.

This series was conceived as a subject which I could present, once a year, to the London meetings of the Society, the extent of which would obviate me compiling a fresh subject

each time I was to present a programme. With the help of our late member Len Watts' label collection and his assistance in the preparation and presentation of my programmes, which entails the use of slide projections, sound recordings and the delivery of the textual information, we deemed our material to be suitable for publication in HILLDALE NEWS.

Not having as extensive a label collection as others, I relied on Len Watts and the co-operation of others, such as members Jim Hayes, Ernie Bayly and Arthur Badrock, to extend the list of label names which I have come across in my own researches. There never was an intention of compiling a book on the subject, as my central activity has been with records and record catalogues and the histories of the companies which were responsible for their production. The results of my researches have been appearing in print, within and outside of the HILLDALE NEWS, these past thirty years.

My presentation to the London meeting in September last, has brought me near to the end of the labels beginning with the letter 'J'. For my next presentation, I have to compile what labels I am aware of, beginning with the letters 'K' and 'L' and on how much data I already have to hand will depend what further research I must embark upon to present as much information about each label as I will be able. I therefore have a long way to go before I reach Zion Records, and as I am now 80 years old, well – who knows?

Frank Andrews;

██████████ LONDON; NW10.

CLPGS Membership Details 2000

When I first joined the Society in 1983 I was somewhat surprised to learn that no Membership List had ever been published. I raised the matter on several occasions over the years as I felt that such a list would at best

encourage greater communication among members, and at worst, do little harm, provided that the list was available only to members, and that individuals had the right of exclusion. You will no doubt recall this matter being aired by the Editors and Chairman in HILLANDALE NEWS no. 226.

I was therefore delighted to receive my copy of Membership Details 2000 with the information so clearly set out and thoughtfully cross-indexed. Alas, my rapture was almost instantly modified by the realisation that the idea had again in the Chairman's own words 'received a resounding thumbs-down'. In a footnote to my letter in HILLANDALE NEWS no. 217, former Editor Mr. Hamilton explained that the number of members worldwide was around 700, with some 500 based in the United Kingdom. As only 180 members are currently listed it would appear that three-quarters of the membership have decided against having their names included.

In the light of the specialist nature of the Society and the relatively small number of members I am surprised and dismayed at this poor response, and wonder if other members who are listed now feel as I do that the usefulness of a Membership List has been seriously compromised by its being so incomplete. It would be interesting to discover whether there exists a downside of which I am unaware to the idea of a List which has resulted in its rejection by such a large majority of the membership. Without wishing to appear churlish I would also be interested to learn whether the Membership Details have been distributed to the entire membership, or only to those members listed therein.

William McKnight Toner;

Renfrewshire;
PA11 3HA.

[Editors' Note – We think that our correspondent is grouping the 'Wait-and-See' and 'Must Get Round To It' categories with the 'Not at Any Price' group, and is therefore jumping to the wrong conclusion. Our

Chairman's initiative definitely comes into the 'Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained' category, so we shall have to wait and see whether the List grows larger in future editions. Oh, and it has been circulated to all members – how else would non-respondents be encouraged to join the List?]

That C-word again

After reading the letter from a Mr. Eric Smith, issue no. 231, I was somewhat appalled by his reaction to the word, Crapophone.

I was also surprised that he did not tell his friend that he had bought a worthless and very bad reproduction gramophone. If he had, his friend might just have had the possibility of getting his money back, and then putting it towards a genuine machine.

UGLY, in print, but sounds good, especially if you have been had, and yes, some people have paid £500 and been told and believed that the machine was original. In this case, the result is UGLY. Mr. Smith, the word is used, not to sound witty, but to make people aware.

YOUR WITTY ALTERNATIVES, Mr. Smith, sound good, but they do not have the power to make people aware, as in your case, you obviously do not know the trade and the sort of people who are out there, to sell these awful and very bad imitations.

Mr. Smith, I would have thought that your time would have been better spent, getting rid of these machines, rather than the description of same.

K. Priestley, co-author of the name;

HOLMFIRTH, West Yorkshire.

That C-word again, no. 2

Personally, whilst I cringe when I see [crapophones] I have no problem with them being offered for sale for display purposes. They are of course, no different from a wide range of other repro furniture and antiques. What of course, is clearly unforgivable is when they are misrepresented as being old.

The other day I visited the Pavilion of the United Arab Emirates at EXPO 2000 in Hannover. They display a 1920s room in an Arab house and – surprise, surprise! – there is a six-sided shiny, horned machine!



Figure 1. Fake machine on display at EXPO 2000, Hannover, Germany.

A few miles away in Knochenhauerstr. there are the premises of Antiquitäten & Schmuck, who specialise in gramophones. There again I saw a shiny horned machine standing out like a beacon.

The proprietor spoke English very well – nevertheless, the conversation went as follows –

Q. How old is that gramophone? **A.** Twelve hundred marks.

Q. When was it made? **A.** It was made in London.

Q. How long ago? **A.** I'll play it for you.

Q. What is its age? **A.** I have some others over here.

Eventually and under pressure, he said it was made in 1920s/30s. I have ways of making people talk!

I suppose he could just have been truthful and said it was 'turn of the century'!



Figure 2. The second fake machine discovered.

John McGlynn;

██████████ BLACKPOOL; FY3 8ND.

National Vintage Communications Fair

Crisis? ... What Crisis?

May I take this opportunity through your magazine to express my thanks to all those visitors and stallholders (including the CLPGS) whose efforts to attend the National Vintage Communications Fair helped make it such a success when it was held on Sunday, September 17th – right at the end of the petrol crisis.

It was a difficult week of uncertainty and stress for everybody, but the many messages of support and encouragement we received convinced us that we should still 'go for it' – they were all very much appreciated.

Jonathan Hill (Organiser NVCF);

EXETER; EX1 2HF.

More on Editorial Content

George Taylor's article on the editorial content of the magazine (issue no. 230) prompted me to give a different opinion.

Larry Karps' article on restoring the Belknap Toy Circus Wagon was one of the best we have had. It was well written, with much interesting information and full of good humour. The photographs showed the detail of the mechanism to advantage and I hope that if ever I find a Belknap I can make as good a job of its restoration.

I am not a great jazz enthusiast, but Mike Durham's article on King Oliver was very enlightening and it was good to take a look back to the Good Old Days of the Big Bands.

I look forward to Frank Andrews' 'Continuing Series' in every issue. It is a wealth of information and lends added interest to my record collection. For me, it is the highlight of HILLDALE NEWS and judging by the amount of additional information he receives, it must be one of the most popular.

We also have regular articles by Richard Taylor and Dave Cooper, to name but a few, and now to top it all, Phil Bennett's 'Savoy Syncopation', much to my wife's enjoyment.

I would congratulate both the previous and present Editors for their excellent work in producing a most interesting magazine, and my thanks to John and Pauline Cully of Barnsley, for putting us in touch with the CLPGS in the first place.

Charles C. Stopani;

ABERDEEN; AB15 7RY.

[Editors' note - Mr. Stopani, in another letter, considers that Mr. Smith's suggested alternative names for fake gramophones were excellent, and volunteered another two - CONOPHONE, and CONAGRAM.]

Lionel Monckton and *The Geisha*, no. 1

With reference to John D. Baldwin III's letter in the Autumn number, I would like to make the following points -

1. The correct spelling of the composer's name is Monckton, NOT Moncton [*Thank you - Ed.*];
2. His co-composer of *The Arcadians* was Howard Talbot, not Edward Talbot;
3. The Ohio Light Opera's recording of *The Arcadians* is not complete. There are ten numbers in my copy of the vocal score not included in the recording. Of those ten, eight are listed in the addenda to the score and may not have been in the original production. Several numbers in the recording are abbreviated.
4. It is not appropriate to call *The Geisha* a 'musical'. In those days, such entertainments were called 'musical comedies'. The inelegant and ungrammatical use of the word 'musical' as a noun did not arise until some time after World War II. Such use is ambiguous because it can mean musical comedy, operetta, comic opera, musical play or pop opera (by which I mean sung throughout entertainments, such as *Les Miserables* or *Evita*).

Barry Badham;

Pymble, N.S.W. 2073, Australia.

Lionel Monckton, no. 2

With reference to John Baldwin's letter in the Autumn issue regarding Lionel Monckton, I feel I must put the record straight.

Monckton was the most successful of the handful of composers in the field of musical comedy, during the early 1900s. The sales of his popular songs from his stage shows are way ahead of his competitors, the closest being Paul Rubens. His four most successful shows, *A Quaker Girl*, *A Country Girl*, *The Boy*, and *The Arcadians* ran to 536, 728, 800 and 809 performances respectively, closely followed by *Our Miss Gibbs* with 636, which

Keith Wallis;
Surbiton.

The December 1913 Victor supplement announced that Melba 'arrived in America October 1st, and came directly to the Victor Laboratory for the making of some new records'. At that session she and Jan Kubelik recorded *Ave Maria*. Gabriel Lapierre provided the piano accompaniment. (There was no organ on the American version.) In spite of Dr. Taylor's scepticism, it is a fact

that the soprano, the violinist, and the pianist on the Victor record were the same artists who recorded the HMV version several months earlier.

Melba and Kubelik toured America, giving a series of joint recitals, between 9th October 1913 and April 1914. Gabriel Lapierre was almost certainly Melba's accompanist on that tour.

Quentin Riggs;

Edmond, OK 73034-7032; USA.

Dealers' Pricing Policies

I have to take issue with my fellow townsman Dave Cooper and his incredible critical observations that dealers who use recent auction house catalogues as a basis for pricing are 'outrageous'. The estimates in these catalogues almost always reflect the auctioneers' expert knowledge on values based on other auction results. As such, they are a very important guide to values.

I know of several dealers who have reduced prices dramatically in the light of latest information from the salerooms. This clearly benefits the buyer, and whilst it may not benefit the seller in profit terms, it enables him to refresh his stock.

Equally, I know of many dealers who do review their prices in the light of upward movement in values.

As the London Stock Exchange, the Bullion market, insurance companies and traders in every commodity under the sun would tell him, prices are fairly set by the coming together of buyers and sellers who reach decisions together on prices and thereby set benchmark values.

Whilst I agree with Dave's almost unnecessary comments about sellers of fake gramophones as the genuine articles and welcome his regular contributions to HILLANDALE NEWS, his remarks about dealers reviewing prices in the light of market forces have given offence already to several dealers whom I must defend. Perhaps a contribution

of less than five pages next time and concentration on matters mechanical would be more appropriate!

John McGlynn;

BLACKPOOL;
FY3 8ND.

The 'Selecta' Soundbox

Apropos the 'Selecta' soundbox in the Mystery Machine no. 2 in the Autumn issue of HILLANDALE NEWS, I can elaborate a little on 'Selecta' which, in long-hand style, was a 1925 registered trade mark of G. A. Bryan, Ltd., the talking machine industry dealers dating from 1914, after that company had moved to 81 Southwark Street, London, SE1. Earlier the company had been at 3-5 Frith Road, Croydon, Surrey, having had the word 'Selectaphone' as its registered trade mark, since May 1919.

I happen to have a Selectaphone portable machine with a mid-oak wooden case. It has no tone arm. The Selecta soundbox is connected to a flattened type of megaphone that points directly back to the opened lid which bears a curved reflecting board to throw the sound forward. Years ago, I demonstrated this machine at a London meeting.

It is probably true to state that G. A. Bryan, Ltd. did not manufacture its own gramophones and accessories. I also have three of the five Selecta records which were made for the company by The Parlophone Company, Ltd. In October 1928, the company, still with both registered trade marks, changed its name to Selecta Gramophones, Ltd.

G. A. Bryan, Ltd. was founded in November 1914, taking over G. A. Bryan's business known as "Bryan's". In 1915, the company were record factors for Columbia, The Winner, Phoenix and the Diamond Double Disc Records and factors for Columbia and Regal machines. The company also factored records from the Edison Bell Works, and from Parlophone after they came on the scene in 1923.

The Garrard motors were first made in Willesden, London, NW10, where I was born and lived until moving to the next village, Neasden, NW10. Garrard later moved to Swindon, Wiltshire, I believe.

Frank Andrews;

London, NW10.

The Balmain Gramophone at Phonofair 2000, reviewed

I thoroughly enjoyed Mr Abelson's review of the Balmain at Phonofair 2000 and indeed, I hope it will be on the market before long.

I went down to see my local cycle and gramophone dealer to ask him to reserve one as soon as they arrive, and he tells me that there has been a similar breakthrough in the cycle world. Apparently an inventor has come forward with smell-free calcium carbide for cycle lamps. The new 'Nopong' carbide will be available soon.

Returning to the Balmain, I particularly like the idea of standing the machine on end against the wall and bouncing the sound off the ceiling. The record clamp as widely used in the recording industry is a good idea. My feeling is that if the machine is vertical then the listener ought to be horizontal with perhaps some sort of clamp to hold them in the right place on the floor.

It is indeed wonderful how modern science seems to come up with the right thing at the right time.

Roger S. Thorne;

CATERHAM,
Surrey.

[Editors' Note – The fact remains that the Balmain, as constructed, is a remarkable piece of equipment, fundamentally simple in concept, but capable of getting as much sound out of the groove as was put in in the first place. It is also of the first importance to remark that this Balmain was constructed for largely academic reasons, i.e., to prove that it could be made, and made to work well, and to discover whether the original was likely to have been as much of a revelation to the

listener as has been documented. Such has now been proved, as far as these things can ever be.]

British Odeon Listing – Help Wanted

For the past 3-4 years I have been working on the complete British Odeon listing between the years 1904-1915. I am almost ready to start typing the list for publication. However, I am in urgent need to see either a 1908 or 1909 catalogue, as a number of records issued during 1908 in particular, were not advertised and were deleted by the 1910 catalogue, which I have. All expenses will be met.

Also, can readers check their Odeon records and advise me of the matrix no. for any they might have in their collection. All I need is the catalogue no., if one is shown, face no. and any other nos. that might be around the shellac outside the label as they often show previous series catalogue nos. (there were four series altogether). Some matrix nos. will be difficult to see as they are under the label.

This information is required to ensure that the final listing is complete as possible.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Mike Langridge;

Rustington, West Sussex;
BN16 2QY.

The 'Express & Star' Record

[Editors' Note – Readers will recall reference in Frank Andrews' article in issue no. 231 to the 'Express & Star' record, published by the Wolverhampton-based newspaper of the same name. Mr. Fred Perks, of Tipton – an honorary member of the Midlands Group – enquired of the newspaper whether they had information about the record. The following is their reply, which Fred sent to Frank Andrews –

From my inquiries it appears that the Express & Star record was made as a limited-edition Christmas gift to advertisers in the late 1930s. It was the idea of our advertising manager, Mr. Milner Riley, and the poem was written by our editorial artist, Arthur Arrowsmith.

Harry Fay was commissioned to record the monologue in the North Country style of Stanley Holloway.

While Albert and the Lion tells the story of a small boy eaten by a lion, The Newspaper and Albert tells how an over-eager boy fell into a printing press.

The recording was one of a number of gimmicks designed to foster goodwill between the newspaper and its advertisers. I hope this is of some help.

Peter Rhodes, Chief Feature Writer;

WOLVERHAMPTON; WV1 1ES.

HMV Portables; and Children's Records

Further to my latest part on HMV portables in issue no. 230, I also wish to point out that contrary to my previous remarks that the Model 99 turntables do not have a raised rim, in fact, some later ones do.



Figure 1. The sleeve for the '3 on 1 Golden Record'.

My article on the Marx toy gramophone encouraged much interest in Children's Records a few years ago. In the Spring issue, Mike Durham mentioned the later Gala series of children's 78s. If you remember, I referred to Gala's 45rpm series called '3 on 1'. This is

the missing link between what I originally wrote about and to what Mike refers. I had not seen one of these records since 1963 (when I was 7!). Even then, I had only come across one before.

Please find attached a photocopy of the label and sleeve, which I hope, will be of interest to the members and should round off the story.



Figure 2. A label for the '3 on 1 Golden Record'.

Dave Cooper;

BLACKPOOL;
FY3 8HB.

CORRECTION

On p. 157 of the Autumn 2000 HILLDALE NEWS the size of the plane in which I flew from Mount Gambier to Adelaide became reduced. It was in fact, a 20-seater (of O'Connor Airlines). I had left Britain in December 1999.

Ernie Bayly

Vintage Technology Fair

Be sure to join us by the seaside for a day of gramophones, records, music machines and accessories.

Sunday, 20th May, 2001

De Vere Hotel, East Park Drive, Blackpool

Leave the M55 at J.4, take the A583 and A587

9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Stall prices reduced! Contact us now for a booking form
(If you already get our mailers you will receive one automatically)

John McGlynn & Brian Chesters

Tel: [REDACTED] : Fax: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

"as seen on Collector's Lot"

The National Vintage Communications Fair

HALL 11 • NEC • BIRMINGHAM

10.30am - 4pm • Sunday 29th April 2001

300+ Stallholders selling:
**MECHANICAL MUSIC
VINTAGE RADIOS, TVs,
TELEPHONES, MICS,
CLASSIC AUDIO/HI-FI,
GRAMS/RECORDS etc. etc.**

Details/Booking Forms (stalls only £45)
Sunrise Press, Spice House, 13 Belmont Road,
Exeter, Devon EX1 2HF. Tel: (01392) 411565

• Entry £5 •

(inc. FREE NVCF 2001 Fair
Guide, while stocks last)

Early entry (from c.8.30am) £15





Due to pending retirement

THE 78 RECORD EXCHANGE

(Founded 1963)

is

FOR SALE

An opportunity for the entrepreneur wishing to acquire an established business with a local and international clientele.

Our vast stock of around 180,000 78s, LPs and 45s are sorted and merely await cataloguing to recoup excellent returns.

Further details from –

**The 78 Record Exchange, 9 Lower Hillgate,
STOCKPORT, Cheshire; SK1 1JQ.**

Open daily. Callers welcome!

HILLANDALE NEWS is published by The City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society
Limited - Reg. No. 3124250. ISSN-0018-1846. © 2001 C.L.P.G.S.Ltd.

REPRODUCTION WITHOUT AUTHORITY PROHIBITED

Printed for CLPGS Ltd by Craneprint Ltd., Sedgley Street, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV2 3AJ.

The CLPGS BOOKSHOP

WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA, Norfolk; NR23 1RD.

Telephone –

RECENT PUBLICATIONS available for the Winter of 2000/2001.

“DISCOVERING ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPHS” – Fabrizio & Paul. The 3rd hardback book issued by this hardworking pair. Dealing with the period 1877 to 1929. 244 pages containing some 400 coloured photographs. Historic machines pictured and detailed where single examples are known. Cost is £39-95 plus postage. Reference no. **BD-46**.

PARLOPHONE 12” ‘E’-prefixed series – Frank Andrews and Michael Smith. A complete listing of the Vocal, Instrumental and Orchestral recordings, as issued from 1923 until 1956. 8 pages of Introduction and History. 188 pages of listings, 6 page index. Spaces filled with portraits from a 1926 Parlophone catalogue, plus their brief biographical notes. EMI have given the Society permission to reproduce 9 various Parlophone labels. Cost is £25-00 per copy. Reference no. **BD-53**.

“COMPLETE LIST of up to date RECORDS made by the NORTH AMERICAN PHONOGRAPH Co.”. List dated November 1st, 1893. 8 pages A5 size on thick sepia paper. Edison Electric Phonograph @ \$175; the Bell Tainter Columbia-style treddle machine for \$140. Listings of ‘plain number’ and ‘B’ records. Cost is £2-50 plus postage. Reference no. **CL-38**.

ZONOPHONE SINGLE-SIDED RECORDS – Frank Andrews and Ernie Bayly. The definitive listing of all the 5”, 7”, 10” and 12” records sold in Great Britain from 1904 to 1913. Pre-acquisition discs available during the first issues. Covers Band and Instrumental, Operatic, Concert Hall and Music Hall. Recorded by named artists or with pseudonyms given, where applicable. Records in French, Italian, German and Hebrew. 290 pages of text with full Index, Introduction by Frank Andrews and examples of coloured styles of labels. A4 size, soft cover, cost £24. Reference no. **BD-44**.

SOCIETA ITALIANA di FONOTIPIA. Reproduction of an original 12½” × 7½” catalogue, dated 1907. Lavish production featuring Operatic and Instrumental artists recording for the Fonotipia label. Biographical details in Italian, with large photographs and the recordings available. Cost £12-00. Reference no. **BD-42**.

“CINCH” 10” double-sided records – Arthur Badrock and Frank Andrews. A5 format, 58 pages listing output. Monochrome example of label on cover; first supplement featuring Billy Williams inside. Cost £6-00. Reference no **CL-52**.

BRUNSWICK 10” ‘100’ series. A5 listing by Arthur Badrock; 11 pages plus index. Cost £2-00. Reference no. **CL-50**.

EDISON BELL “ELECTRON”. A5 listing by Arthur Badrock; 13 pages plus index. Cost £2-00. Reference no. **CL-51**.

Michael Smith has sent me the last remaining copies of his 1992 publication “**Discography of HMV ‘BD’ series of records**”. These are paperback A5 size. 160 pages, and available for £6 per copy.

Please, please remember – Postage costs are – Inland: ‘+10%’ on the cost of any of the above books: minimum postage 50p; e.g., Cinch is £2, plus 50p minimum postage; Fonotipia is £12, plus £1-20 postage. Overseas rate is ‘+15%’, minimum cost of ‘+£1’. Cheques to be made in favour of CLPGS Books, and not me personally.

George Woolford

CHRISTIE'S



EDISON 'PARLOR' TINFOIL PHONOGRAPH

Sold 6 December 1999 for £32,200.

Record auction price for a phonograph.

We don't sell records...We break them

Gramophones, Phonographs and accessories

in Mechanical Music Sales at Christie's South Kensington

2001 Auctions

12 April • 26 July • 29 November

All auction dates are provisional and
may be subject to alteration

Enquiries

Christopher Proudfoot
cproudfoot@christies.com

Catalogues

(020) 7389 2820

South Kensington

85 Old Brompton Road
London SW7 3LD

www.christies.com